

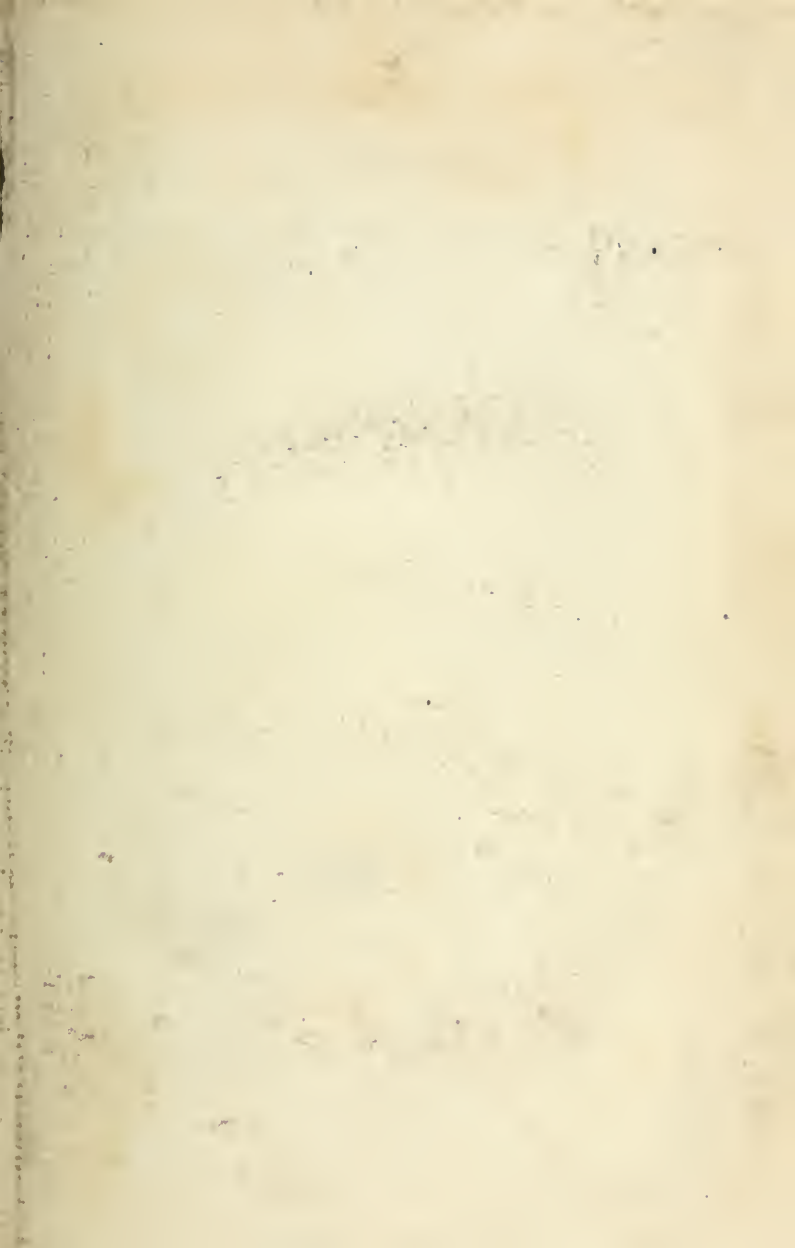
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PICTURES OF THE PAST





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PICTURES OF THE PAST.

PICTURES OF THE PAST;

OR

Rhythmical Recollections of a Foreign Tour,

TO WHICH ARE ADDED SOME

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

BY

ROSE E. THACKERAY,

Authoress of "Social Sketches."

"Blest memory guide with fingers nicely true,
Back to my youth my retrospective view."—*H. Kirke White.*

NORWICH:
PRINTED BY FLETCHER AND SON.
1876.

PR

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TG p

“AND where are those we valued once
When life was young and gay,
The friends of earlier years?—they're gone
To brighter worlds away :

But still we love to think upon
The time we've spent with them,
And cherish feelings sweet, that grew
On friendship's sacred stem.”

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PICTURES OF THE PAST.

THE SABBATH EVENING BEFORE DEPARTURE.

“If Thy presence go not with us, carry us not out hence.”

SWEET was that Sabbath eve,
When the prayer of faith was o'er,
We knew we soon should leave
Our home and native shore.

Health to a father dear
Had lately been denied,
Yet we strove with latent fear,
To keep him by our side.

The southern clime and breeze,
New scenes for every hour,
Might still arrest disease,
And on us blessings shower.

We'd heard the words of peace,
And sought "The Truth, the Life,"
Our troubles seemed to cease,
Our hearts were free from strife.

We thought, as slumber deep
Wrapt every breathing form,
Of death's long dreamless sleep,
Ere judgment's dreadful morn !

We looked on years to come,
As on a fleeting show,
How large would be their sum,
We had no wish to know.

For op'ning to our view,
Beyond those years appeared
A prospect bright and new,
The lovelier when neared.

Where the immortal fruit
Hangs ripe from tree to tree,
And voices here once mute
Burst forth in melody !

Where pure, unchanging, blest,
From loved ones ne'er to sever,
We shall enjoy that rest—
Prepared by God—for ever.

THE FAREWELL.

THE sea-wind blows around us, dear,
And as we glide along,
Many will drop a bitter tear,
Amid that parting throng.

Thou, too, wilt breathe a heartfelt sigh,
And muse on pleasures o'er,
But, oh ! wilt thou, when I'm not by,
Feel ev'ry pang the more ?

Thy parting kiss, say, will it be
Tender as that last year !
Say, in a word, am I to thee
As then—perchance *more* dear ?

If so, oh, give me now thy hand !
And while 'tis clasped in mine,
I'll vow, by holy friendship's band,
That I am wholly thine.

THE TRAVELLERS' HYMN.

THE waves are round about us,
But we will not fear ;
The sceptic—*he* may doubt us—
Yet our God is near.

The sea storm lowers o'er us,
Huge waves around us fly,
But earth hath not so bound us,
That we should fear to die.

The avalanche descending
 May crush the fragile clay,
Upon our God depending,
 Our souls will ebb away.

Banditti may assail,
 Bullets may pierce the brain,
Our faith shall never fail,
 That's far beyond their aim.

The pestilence come nigh us,
 Loved kindred die around,
Our God sees fit to try us,
 Still trusting we are found.

The inward, dark disease
 May mark our time is nigh !
'Mid intervals of ease,
 Upon our God we'll cry.

And when in arms we love,
 Our souls shall pass away,
Great God, each soul approve,
 Amid the realms of day.

THE RHINE.

I SAW the day in glorious beauty drest,
Beneath me flowed the broad, majestic Rhine,
And from each craggy steep, and mountain's crest,
Waved in rich beauty the luxuriant vine.

Girt by the silver stream, each fairy isle
Arose like wild enchantment to my view,
'Mid fallen grandeur nature seemed to smile,
That ev'ry year *her* glories would renew.

Farewell, sweet stream, thy richly varied charms
Invite the traveller from his island home,
Thy beauty e'en the critic's pen disarms,
And tempts him onward more and more to roam.

MADAME LA VALLIÈRE.

Supposed to have been written after her retirement to the convent at Chailiôt, near Paris.

HIS eye replies no more to me,
My voice he heeds not now,
Wilfully blind, he will not see
Care's furrows on my brow.

Within my breast he cannot look,
And see what's written there,
Deep love hath not my heart forsook,
Tho' filled with dark despair!

And is the eye—he once called bright—
Tearful, to seek the ground?
The step—he praised—so free and light,
To pace the cloisters round?

Should yonder brilliant sun depart,
And leave the world in gloom,
'Twould image well my breaking heart,
Pent in this living tomb

For, like that glorious sun, the smile
From royal lips* hath fled,
No rank, no wealth, can now beguile,
For hope lies cold and dead.

France! twine thy laurels round his brow,
Go, history, write his *fame*!
Challiôt, thy gloomy portals now
Bury my grief and shame.†

THE PILGRIMS' HYMN.

"EARTH has no abiding city,
We are pilgrims on the way,
Lord, give us food, give us pity,
While we toil our weary day.

* Louis XIV.

† See "Mèmoires de Madme. la Vallière," par Madme. de Genlis.

While we tarry, oh ! instruct us
Where our home, our country lies ;
By Thy strong right arm conduct us
To that home beyond the skies.

Shelter us while we yet remain,
Keep us from all snares around,
Curbing our passions with a rein,
Holding our earthly wishes bound.

What Thou giv'st us here to do,
May it cheerfully be done ;
To each and all be kind and true,
Pointing to the road we run.

Never lured by fevered bliss,
Wasting precious hours winging,
But in such a world as this,
Ever watchful, often singing.

Earth has no abiding city,
We are pilgrims on the way,
Lord, give us food, give us pity,
While we toil our little day."

SWITZERLAND.

HAIL, evening! by the glassy lake,
Hail, evening! by the tangled brake,
Hail, evening! as the tinkling bell
Of kine resounds thro' hill and dell.

From craggy rocks the agile goat
Springs at the cone's far distant note,*
And the hunter comes, behold, his prize!
There, at his feet, a chamois lies.

O'er mountain tops the sun's last ray,
Now spreads the blush of ling'ring day,
And deep'ning shadows softly tell
The near approach of his farewell.

* The cone, or cow's horn, blown by the goatherd to collect the animals from their pasture on the mountains; when all are assembled and counted, the boy drives them before him to the village, when each goat stops at its respective home for the night: they appear of themselves when summoned by him in the morning, and return together to the grassy heights.

Dark crags which, in their headlong fall,
E'en the bold Switzers oft appal,
Stand out in rigid, grey relief,
Amid the forest's changing leaf.

The gushing torrent still flows on,
Tho' day which shewed its beauty's gone ;
While her native airs the Swiss girl sings,
As 'cross yon rustic bridge she springs.

No twilight now ! but dark, dark night,
Save when the moon with kindly light,
Illumines all the vale below,
And the as yet untrodden "Frau." *

THE GOATHERD'S
MORNING HYMN TO THE VIRGIN.

HAIL ! Marie, hail ! here, at thy shrine I bow,
Oh ! hear my prayer, list to a suppliant's vow :

*The "Young Frau" or young woman : a high mountain in the Canton de Berne ; so called on account of its pure white appearance. Since these lines were written it has been ascended by members of the Alpine Club.

Pure are these hands which now I raise to thee,
Pure keep this heart, from sin and danger free,
Calm as the lake by nature's hand imprest,
Pure as the water sparkling on its breast ;
Keep thou our flocks and herds, Madonna fair,
Make them of chasm deep and rock beware.
Lo ! 'tis the goatherd's bell—I haste to guide
My herd to pasture on the mountain's side ;
I haste away—I climb yon frozen sea ; *
Perchance I never more return to thee.
The avalanche may suddenly descend,
Then my poor goats would lose their fondest friend.
I kneel to thee. Oh, Holy Marie ! deign
To heed my prayer, to hear my humble strain,
Then on thy shrine, at eve when I return,
I'll place a wreath thy altar to adorn.
Holy Marie ! guard me thro' danger's track,
Holy Marie ! bring the poor goatherd back.

* The glacier has not been inaptly styled a "*frozen sea*."

EVENING ON THE LAC DE THUN.

I SAW the evening on the mountain's brow,
Where savage winter holds eternal reign,
I marked the sunset while it tinged the snow,
Burnish the flower on the verdant plain.
Then forth in brightest majesty did shine,
On the deep waters of the lake, the moon ;
While the bat flitted thro' the mountain pine,
Soon lost in dark, impenetrable gloom ;
Then on the other side were distant spires,
Pointing like fingers to the dark blue skies,
Meet emblems of the spirit which aspires
To other worlds, hidden from human eyes.

A DARK NIGHT BEFORE A STORM.

NATURE now lies in deep repose,
Each sound is hushed ! no zephyr blows ;
The sombre pines like warning ghosts appear,
And all is wrapt in mournful silence drear,
No star is seen, or silvery moon to cheer.

* * * * *

Hark ! 'tis the storm advancing near,
God's awful thunders peel,
Yet shall I know one coward fear,
Or apprehension feel ?
The forkèd lightning flashing bright,
Illumines all the sky,
Sheds round a strange unearthly light,
As on my couch I lie.
On comes the devastating blast,
With slowly rising swell !

And now it bursts—and now it's past,
Moaning its low farewell.
Like water-spout from yonder cloud
Descends the 'whelming rain,
And echoes fearfully and loud,
O'er châlet, wood, and plain.
Oh! awful scene! Lord of my life,
In this tremendous hour,
Amid the elemental strife,
I feel, I own Thy power.
Tears fill my eyes, I plead for those,
Who, in a snowdrift tost,*
Cry out in terror's bitter throes,
"Lord, save us, or we're lost!"
Oh! kind and Christian hearts ye have,
Who, e'en from night till morn,
Strive the poor traveller's life to save,
Amid the mountain storm;
Who now perchance are on the track,
With careful steps and slow,
To bring the ill-fated wanderer back,
From 'mid the driving snow;
The faithful dog doth onward bound,
Like ye he hath no fear,

* When rain falls in the Swiss valleys it often snows on the mountains.

And often to the icy ground
He bends a listening ear,*
Then dashes down a steep incline,
To rescue from distress,
Bearing a flask of gen'rous wine,
The traveller to caress ;
Borne thence, and in the Hospice laid,
Fam'd for kind deeds of yore,
The good monks by their timely aid
Bring back dear life once more.
What is *real pleasure* ?—the power
To succour the distress
'Mid Alpine snow in danger's hour—
In *this* the monk is blest.

* On Mount St. Bernard dogs accompany the monks in pairs, and are generally sent before ; the acuteness of their scent and hearing is so great, they can soon discover if any one be overwhelmed by an avalanche, or buried in a snow-drift. They carry round their necks a bottle containing a restorative, which the poor traveller (if not too much exhausted) can open, and drink from ; if they find him insensible, they will lie on him to impart warmth, barking and moaning until assistance arrives.

EARLY MORNING AFTER THE STORM.

ERE the fair distant landscape glows,
Or the rain drops sparkle on the rose,
As, waving in her fragrant pride,
She decks the valley-garden's side,—
And ere the rosy tints appear,
Of the bright sun from yonder sphere,
In varied form to bless the eye,—
I'll peep forth from my casement high.

How fresh the morn—what peace, what calm,
Spreads o'er the châlet and the farm !
Meet hour for contemplation given,
Oh, let me gaze and muse of Heaven !

* * * * *

Father of ev'ry good, to Thee
I'll raise my early prayer,
From youth to age extend to me
Thy kind protecting care.

As flowers op'ning to the sun,
With richer beauties glow,
So faith within me once begun,
No change by time may know ;
And as the gay and feathered choir,
Praise Thee with tuneful throats,
So may Thy love my heart inspire
To raise rejoicing notes !
And, as from noonday's fervid heat,
The flocks in shade repose,
Oft from the world may I retreat,
And shun all artful foes.
Then in the twilight of my day,
When objects seem less bright,
Still may faith's lamp, which guides my way,
Shed round serener light ;
And if to hoary-headed age
Thou still shalt lead me on,
May heav'nly themes my thoughts engage,
Till life's last spark be gone.

ITALY.

THE VINEYARD.

“When thou comest into thy neighbour's vineyard, then thou mayest eat grapes thy fill, at thine own pleasure, but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel :” Deut. xxiii, 24.

I PASSED a vineyard, and its juicy store
Tempted my palate, and I quickly tore
A bunch away, so great the parching heat,
And found therein a sweet and luscious treat ;
And while I ate, I saw within the grove,
Where hung in gay festoons the fruit I love,
A little maid, with hat so neat and trim,
Shading a face the sun could never dim,
While a red bodice, with its ribbons rare,
Laced in a form a sculptor would deem fair ;
With smiling lips—her dark eyes on me bent—
She said, as on the gate I wearied leant,
“Cara signora, I am pleased to find
The fruit hath stayed your thirst ; and to your mind
I trust the grapes in flavour may compare
With any in Italia's vineyards fair.”

“You speak the truth,” said I, “my pretty lass,
And do you let all those who chance to pass
Partake as freely of this juicy store,
And take away a bunch or two, or more!”
“No, no, signora,” said the southern maid,
“When the worn traveller’s thirst is quite allayed,
He must depart, nor think to bear away*
One bunch, or he for all must double pay.”

FLORENCE.

FLORENCE, thou modern Athens of our day,
Impressions made by thee ne’er pass away ;
They on fond memory’s page will linger ever,
And form through life a sweet recurring pleasure.
Thy stately palaces, so vast and high,

* In Italy, when the grapes are being gathered, a passing traveller is allowed to stop and take a bunch, without asking permission ; but should he attempt to *take any away*, he would be arrested as a thief, and heavily fined.

Galileo's tower, whence he scanned the sky,*
Thy winds from lofty Apennines blow cold,
And native cloaks appear with ample fold,
Making us strangers from north regions smile,
And feel as if again in Britain's isle!
But enter we 'neath yonder sacred dome,
Or in thy galleries for pastime roam,
Where the mind is entranced with paintings rare,
So lifelike are the forms depicted there.
Here in the "Tribune" beauty's model stands,†
There the list'ning slave with sinewy hands ;
Two noted wrestlers struggling for a prize,
On which we gaze with all admiring eyes.
Then in the streets, at many a turn we see
Some ancient building known to history,
While from the bridge, which spans fair Arno's stream,
The noble palace of thy Dukes' is seen.‡

* There are few men to whom modern science owes more than it does to Galileo, who died quite blind, (having suffered this affliction for two years) aged 78, in 1642, the year Newton was born.

† The Tribune is a room leading out of the Florentine gallery in which stands the famous *Venus di Medici*, the work of Praxitiles the great Greek sculptor ; here are also several other unrivalled works of art. It is said of this sculptor, that when he made his celebrated statue of Venus, he assembled all the most beautiful women in Greece, noting in each her peculiar line of beauty, and then blending them into one splendid whole !

‡ The Palace of the Grand Dukes of Florence contains many gems of art, both in painting and sculpture ; the magnificent rooms are allowed to be seen by the public several days in each week, and artists are allowed to copy there.

THE ABBOT AND THE SAUCE.*

A TALE OF FLORENCE.

AN abbot visited a duke
On some important matter,
Who sat the convent party down
To flagon and to platter.

But as it was a day of fast,
The host had got prepared
A splendid trout; while omelettes rich
And pastry were not spared.

A luscious sauce was handed round,
In golden boat of state,
Of which the abbot helped himself;
It swam all round his plate!

“Don’t touch it, father!” breathed the voice
Of small monk by his side,
“I saw that Satan’s sauce prepared!
And thought I should have cried!”

* This anecdote is related of a prior of the Chartreuse, who accepted an invitation to dinner on condition that nothing unsuitable to a fast day should appear at the table.

“Two rabbits, and a slice of ham
Made up that dish of evil;
Don't touch it, send your plate away,
'Twill not be deemed uncivil!”

“My brother,” said the abbot good,
“I've often told you this,
Your sin is curiosity,
And *that* is much amiss!

“Why were you in the kitchen,
And prying into sauce,
Your sight, I know, is very bad,
And that's a grievous cross!

“Two good sized onions you mistook
For rabbits young and good,
And what you thought was savoury ham,
Were carrots scraped for food.

“Take my advice, and don't again
Be falling into sin;
Avoid all kitchens, and keep close
To me, as doth a pin.”

Timely reproved, the little monk
With relish ate his dinner,
He thought the abbot wise and good,
And that *he'd* been the sinner !

THE TALKATIVE LADY.

A SKETCH.

FOUR long hours at a stretch she talked,
From five o'clock till nine !
She never at her needle worked,
And scarcely read a line !

At "table-d'hôte" she cooled her meat,
By laying down her fork !
She'd rather chatter far than eat !
Her life seem'd one long talk !

Long histories she'd told for years,
Hints, sharp innuendoes
About her neighbours, then came tears,
Leaning on her elbows !

Oh dear ! as dames like her exist,
Do thou, kind fate, befriend me !
If I sit near a guest like this,
No one my place could envy !

“ ECCO ROMA.”

WEARIED with travel, as we gained a hill,
These words* with interest keen our breast did fill ;
For there at last we view'd that classic spot,
The world's famed city, ne'er to be forgot ;
Grandly St. Peter's like a monarch stood,
Beneath swept Father Tiber's yellow flood ;
Above which frowned the castellated tomb
Of Adrian, once emperor of Rome.
Here, on our path, some fluted columns lay ; †
There, aqueducts, long fallen to decay ;
Mingled with palaces of brick and stone,
Bright homes of the noblesse of modern Rome ;
And obelisks, with mystic language wrought,
Show'd what a bygone race had learnt and taught.

* “Behold Rome.”

† Supposed to belong to the tomb of Nero.

MATINS.—A CONVENT CHAPEL.

CHANT OF THE NUNS.

“ Oh Thou, who with a pitying eye
 Regard'st poor fallen man,
Oh Thou, eternal Trinity,
 Who formed life's little span !

Extinguish by each sigh and tear
 The wrath our errors raise,
A temple in our hearts prepare,
 And fill it with Thy praise.

Oh breathe Thy Spirit, Lord, within,
 Each sluggish heart inspire,
And burn out each besetting sin
 With Thy celestial fire.

Lo ! we have sang Thy praises long,
 The day comes on apace,
Oh when with angels shall our song
 Rise round the throne of grace.

Our sister here this holy day
Will vow her life to Thee,
All earth-born thoughts then drive away,
From Satan set her free.

Rend from her heart all paltry joy,
Pride, and each ill desire,
Make prayer be henceforth her employ,
With praise her breast inspire.

All earthly cares she lays aside,
To minister to Thee,
And to become the Church's bride
Now—and eternally !”*

TAKING THE VEIL.

SCENE—a convent chapel—and before our eyes
An altar deck'd—as if for sacrifice ;
And kneeling there a maid of tender years,
With eyes upraised, but unbedewed by tears ;

* Partly translated from a canticle obtained in Rome.

For of her own accord she takes the vow,
And she is here to ratify it now.
On her fair brow appears a jewelled crown,
A gorgeous robe falls from her shoulders down,
While round her neck and arms each costly gem
Outvies the lustre of the diadem.
Why all this show ? it is that from this day
Such baubles from her heart she casts away.
All she resigns ! yet still a richer store
Of sweet home joys, which she may taste no more.
Within these walls, aye, till her funeral day,
In vigils strict* her hours must pass away.

* * * * *

Now mass is sung—her face beams with a smile,
As she departs along the shadowy aisle ;
Then in nun's garb returns, her tresses fair
Cut off—she now the sombre veil must wear ;
The velvet robe and gems she casts aside,
From henceforth she becomes the Church's bride.

* The strictest order in Rome is that of Santa Teresa.

And now prostrate, before the altar lying,
A Latin prayer is muttered for the dying,
A pall funereal is above her spread,
To show that henceforth to the world she's dead !

* * * * *

And now she rises, and a requiem low
Floats through the aisle, with measure soft and slow ;
Then all depart ; one with a lifelong chain,
The rest to join the busy world again.

DEATH OF THE BETROTHED.

Lines suggested by the sudden death of a beautiful and high-born English lady, on the eve of her marriage with a young Roman prince.

RICH, beauteous, noble, loved, thou wast all
The heart could wish, the eye could gaze upon ;
Hath death o'er all this spread his sombre pall,
And left thee in the cold, cold grave—alone ?

Betrothed to one, born of a noble line,
With gifts of fortune equalling thine own,
To-morrow's sun, which on a bride should shine,
Will gleam on lifeless clay! the spirit's gone!

Yes, the "eternal city" oped for thee
Her gates of grandeur, and thy plighted lord
In youth's first love bowed an adoring knee,
Thou wert so good, so true in deed and word.

Thy friends came round thee, and thy sister's eye*
Gleam'd with delight to meet thee at her home,
Thy gorgeous palace† rose so vast and high,
The wonder and the pride of modern Rome.

There pictures, statues, gems of art abound,
There trains of servants all await thy call,
There sumptuous mirrors in each nook are found,
There expectation waits the marriage ball.

Thy young betrothed—he weeps thy early doom,
Around thy couch loved friends are crowding fast,
A prayer—one sigh—then to the stately tomb,
Thy youth, thy beauty, and thy pomp have past!

* The late princess Borgese, also celebrated for her extreme loveliness and personal worth.

† Palazzo Doria, one of the richest in works of art, celebrated especially for the pictures of Poussin and Carrachi.

A *real* "eternal city" now on high
Opes wide her gates to greet thee, pure and blest,
Angels receive thee! and the beaming eye
Of Jesus, bids thee welcome to His rest.

THE ABSENTEES' HYMN.

THOUGH absent from our native isle,
Where pure religion dwells,
Still, Lord, extend Thy gracious smile,
For which each bosom swells.

The creed which keeps the Sabbath day
As sacred, Lord, to Thee,
Whereon we read, and think, and pray,
Our dearest pleasure be.

The word our blessed Saviour taught,
In purity and truth,
With no monastic errors fraught,
Instructs our thoughtless youth.

We do not ask a human power
A pardon to bestow ;
As in each place, in ev'ry hour,
Thy mercies ceaseless flow.

Our own dear native land defend,
With Thy protecting care,
And for each loved and absent friend
Receive our fervent prayer.

THE DISENTOMBED TRESSES.

Under a glass case in the Vatican we observed the long dark and beautiful tresses of a female, which had been discovered in a marble enclosure ; they seemed to have been powdered with some aromatic substance for preservation, and had probably lain there above two thousand years.

DARK tress, whence art thou ? from the marble tomb,
In which to lie for centuries was thy doom,
Com'st thou to light in this far distant day,
To tell of woman fair long passed away ?

Methinks I see thee as thou first didst grow,
On a sweet infant's head, with skin of snow ;
And tended by a mother's kindly hand,
Thy beauties lengthened 'neath a silken band.

* * * * *

I see thee now again, when riper years
Had checked the flow of childhood's frequent tears,
On her—who would with taper fingers twine
A varied wreath amid that length of thine.
I see thee grace the head which bows before
A sculptured god or goddess to adore !

* * * * *

Again I see thee at the cruel show
Which laid the bleeding gladiator low ;
When female hands the fatal signal* gave
To slay the wretch who would their pity crave.

* The gladiator when vanquished looked towards the spectators ; if their thumbs were raised, his life was spared, but if turned downwards he was slain by his opponent.

Although in that dark age thou might'st belong
To one—the gentlest of that pagan throng,
Yet custom, in a barbarous age, will steel
E'en woman's heart, and bid it not to feel.

* * * * *

I see thee now 'mid halls unknown to-day,
Where lamps gleam'd round, moulded in tinted clay,
Where the rich baths of varied marbles steamed
With scented waters*—where fair Romans dreamed
On beds of soft luxuriance, and 'twas there
They braided thee with gems, dark tress of hair.

* * * * *

I see thy mistress now a happy bride,
Decked for the altar, and with virgin pride

* The baths of Livia, wife of the Emperor Augustus, are still shown : they are underground, and retain their beauty unimpaired to this day ; on account of the great dryness of the soil, medallion and rich borders round these lofty chambers are as vivid in colouring as if just fresh from the hand of the artist : the marble baths themselves have been removed to the museum of the Vatican.

Folding her snow-white toga* round her breast,
A lily chaplet on her forehead prest;
Behold her plight her faith at Hymen's shrine,
And round the god a votive offering twine.

* * * * *

Then once again I see thee hanging loose,
Thy beauties unconfin'd by net or noose,
Upon the head which drooping, dying lies,
Unheeding tears dropp'd from a husband's eyes.
I hear the low death wail, and phrensied shriek
Which in sad accents a departure speak;
And shortly in the tomb, dark silken tress,
Lies all thy beauty, all thy loveliness,
Powdered by Egypt's aromatic gum,
Destined to last for centuries to come!
And where is the fair form, and beauteous head
O'er which thy glorious length such splendour shed?
Burnt e'en to ashes! and a crystal vase
Holds all the loveliness of ancient days!

* "Toga pura." A garment worn by the Roman virgins.

And thou, dark tress, shown 'neath transparent glass,
As gazing crowds through art-decked chambers pass,
Art not the least observed, the least admired,
Though now two thousand years have just expired
Since first thy owner in her bright array
Held in old Rome her merry marriage day.

NAPLES.

FAIR queen of beauty, and each costly gem
Arising from thy bay of limpid blue,
Thou look'st a brilliant in a diadem,
Of which nor time, nor change can mar the hue.

ITALY.—MOLA DI GAITA.*

PAYS délicieux, glorieuse Italie,
Où le ciel est si doux, où tout est monument
Tu vis naître Sapho, Corinne, Corneille . . .
Les grâces, les héros, les muses, maint talent,
Qui des siècles toujours feront l'enchantment.

MAD. DE GENLIS.

BEAUTIFUL Mola! so divine and fair,
I love to gaze upon thy beauties rare,
Thy dim horizon, where both land and sky
Are sweetly blended in one golden dye;
And spread around are sweetly scented flowers
Peeping like gems from green and fragrant bowers,
While citron groves, soft waving in the breeze,
Mingle their foliage with the darker trees;
Transparent gleams now shoot athwart my sight,
As I, entranced, behold thy morning's light,
While purple grapes, hanging from graceful vines,
Give vintners promise of ambrosial wines,
And the dark cypress and the olive green
Throw shade and shadow o'er this brilliant scene,
While the blue wave washes thy peerless shore,
Which I perchance, shall never gaze on more.

* Gaita is celebrated in history as being the place where Cicero was murdered: the ruins of his villa, wherein the deed was perpetrated, may still be traced.

NEAPOLITAN LOVE SONG.

LIKE my young bride's hair
Is the creeping vine,
So bright and so fair
Do its clusters shine.

As the light barks glide
On the clear blue sea,
So steps my fair bride
As she cometh to me.

When the day is o'er,
When the sun has set,
We'll dance on the shore
To the gay castanet.

Fair Naples, thy towers
Gleam bright on the sea,
But the home that's ours
Is dearer to me.

There glows rosy health
On the cheek of my bride,
My guitar's my wealth,
And wealth without pride.

A LEGEND OF MOUNT VESUVIUS.

LONG years ago, when down this mountain's side
For many days flowed fast a fiery tide,
People, churches, houses, whate'er stood,
Fell victims to the rapid, seething flood.
It seem'd the outpouring of a vengeful God,
Dealing out desolation by His nod !
When, trembling, one and all, devoutly prayed
To St. Gennaro* for his timely aid ;
From morn till eve before his altar knelt
Both rich and poor ; for all this horror felt.
Alas, in vain ! aye, vain the golden store,
With promise to give freely all, or more !

* The patron saint of the Neapolitans.

Plate, jewels, trinkets, on his altar lay,
And still the mountain roared from day to day.
At length the populace or rabble caught
A new idea, and acted on the thought,
Tore down the statue, rolled it in the mud,
Then pitched it headlong in the briny flood !
The saint sank down—all hoped—to rise no more,
Since all in vain they found it to implore !

* * * * *

After some days Vesuvius bates his ire,
(Perchance was short of coals to feed his fire,)
The belching ceased, the angry flame seem'd spent,
And now the people thought they would relent !
The saint they'd wronged, the breach they'd now repair,
And daily for forgiveness offer prayer ;
They'd have him up again, whate'er occurred,
And sure enough his vot'ries kept their word !
They sought a diver, arm'd him with ropes and tackle
And sent him down with hungry sharks to battle ;
These seemed at first to wish the saint to stay,
But as they could not *eat him*, swam away.

At length drawn up and settled in his place,
The saint once more his pedestal did grace ;
But oh ! a dreadful blemish to disclose,
For in his fall he'd broken off his nose !
Again the diver down was made to hurry
To seek poor Gen's nasal promontory !
And after careful search about the bay,
Brought it once more to light and ken of day :
Then on a velvet cushion, rich and rare,
The trophy placed they, with the greatest care :
Arrived before the statue, up arose
A first rate sculptor to replace the nose ;
But none was needed, for at once it flew
Into its place, with recognition true !
And ne'er could mark by closest search be found
Where it encountered damage by the ground.*

* On the centre of the bridge at Portici (suburb of Naples) which lies in the road to the buried cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii, is a statue of this Saint ; he is represented in the act of stretching out his hand towards Mount Vesuvius, as if to deprecate its wrath.

THE MONK.

A TALE OF NAPLES.

'Twas a sweet evening ; and a summer's day
Had sighed itself in loveliness away ;
On the tideless* sea danced many a sail,
Alike forgetful of all gust and gale.
Near to the shore—glad of a calm retreat—
Sat a fine youth upon a rocky seat ; †
Around grew shrubs and flowers—on the breeze
Floated the perfume of the orange trees.
Long there he sat, not knowing which to say—
“ Shall I remain ? ” or “ Now I'll go away.”
He seemed sometimes to muse, and then anon
Would forward bend, as if the boatman's song

* There is no tide perceptible in the Mediterranean.

† This scene is laid near Virgil's tomb, the ruins of which are kept up ; it is situated in a vineyard on the rock of Pausillipo : from this spot there is a splendid view of Naples, its bay, and Mount Vesuvius, with the mountains of Calabria in the distance. Here a granite seat has been erected by some French General, on which is inscribed a couplet to friendship : it bears date 1814.

His saddened, solitary heart could cheer,
Tho' eager still for other sounds to hear.

* * * * *

At length a step was heard ; and then appeared
An aged man, by time and sorrow seared ;
The wavy locks which once adorned his brow,
No longer mark the shaven tonsure now ;
No colour dyed that worn and sunken cheek,
Where grief in tearful accents seem'd to speak !
While from his neck, the cowl—his waist, the cord—
Told of the monk without a single word.
“ Well, thou art come, Anselmo ; come at last,
When all hope of thy promises seem'd past ;
Here have I sat, and linger'd till the ray
Of sunset faded from our lovely bay ;
Till ev'ry beam athwart the tyrant's isle*
Has been withdrawn like a false fair one's smile.
What can have thus detain'd thee ? dost thou come
With messages of peace to me from Rome ? ”
“ Of peace, Antonio ; I must answer, no !
In better cause some hope I might bestow ;

* Capri, an island 13 miles from Naples, to which the monster Tiberias retired and died.

For let me tell thee, bitter fury reigns
Within thy uncle Clement's holy veins,
That thou—pledged to our mother Church—canst dare
To love a heretic ! however fair,
Or sweet, or gentle, she to thee may seem ;
Alas ! thou dost dream, my son ! aye, thou dost dream ! ”
“ Dream father ! by this raven lock I swear,
This sacred pledge, my sweet Selina's hair,
That I have knelt down at the altar's side,
And asked if she were destined for my bride ;
And the Madonna, smiling soft on me,
Bowed her pure head, as low I bent the knee ! ”
“ Hark ye, my son, dost thou observe how clear
Vesuvius in the distance does appear ?
And, but for that grey, slowly curling smoke,
Looks as if naught eruption could provoke ;
And yet thou knowest in like quiet mood,
It op'd and 'whelm'd Pompeii in a flood !
And thus to thee the Church's wrath will come,
If thou to her shall prove a faithless son ;
And to her stubborn foe will soon reveal,
What the Inquisition can make him feel !
Look at this well worn priestly garb, my son,
Look at this cord, these beads, which, one by one,
At morn, at noon, and evening hour I tell,

That I may know to foil the tempter well.
Aye! look on these: the peace I now enjoy,
Had in my youth a bitter sad alloy;
And if thy passions lead thee thus away,
So into unseen dangers *thou* wilt stray."

* * * * *

"All unconscious—for the Church designed—
I to a Jesuits' College was consigned;
Thoughtless and young, I deem'd the place a school,
Nor once dreamt that they my whole life would rule!
Manhood arrived, a tutor I became,
And in the masters' eyes was free from blame;
Wearing their garb in school, but being out—
That I was free, I never had a doubt!
Then on a mission I was sent to Rome,
To bring some holy relics safely home.
And now, thought I, my father's house I'll seek,
And of my future prospects boldly speak.
Alas! those visions soon were doom'd to fade,
See here the wreck which priestly craft hath made!
The 'eternal city' reached, I wandered through
Those halls replete with pleasures ever new;*

* The galleries of ancient sculpture and paintings in the Vatican.

And there I met a girl of gentle blood,
Of lineage beyond this southern flood,
Brown locks adorned her peerless brow of snow,
Her eyes—sweet eyes—did such expression show,
As pitying angels on the fallen throw !
Those eyes were fixed—where perfect beauty reigns—
On Grecian sculpture ; where the chiseled veins
Seem to dilate, till each proportion fair
Makes us think life, and health, and youth are there.
I saw her, and I felt I ne'er again
Could tear her image from my fever'd brain."

* * * * *

I sought her many weeks, but sought in vain,
For many weeks I saw her not again ;
At length a ball was given, I entered where
Assembled all in Rome, of brave and fair.
I saw her dancing, and my eyes—in thrall—
Look'd but on her—I quite forgot the ball !
I asked an introduction, and that voice,
So soft and sweet, made my full heart rejoice.

* * * * *

We met again, our meeting to repeat,
For I had gone too far now to retreat.

I told her all my prospects, which were fair,
Dream'd not of obstacle, dream'd not of care.
Her friends approv'd her choice, and from that hour
No storm appear'd upon our path to lower !
Until one night, when words of warning fell
From an old priest I'd known from childhood well.
Alas ! 'till then we neither of us knew
Our wishes from a barren source we drew,
And that, e'en then, the Inquisition's spies
Had come about us—tho' in close disguise.

* * * * *

I sent her gifts—useful, not costly things—
These she accepted, and my soul took wings,
To fly each night, to view that cherish'd smile
Which thanked me and did my whole heart beguile.
Again we parted—duty call'd me where
The shores are glorious in the sunny air,
For if a Heaven this lower world can boast
It lies around this bright enchanting coast.*
One day as listless I passed along
These shores, once vocal with Virgilian song,

* Naples is styled by its inhabitants “Uno pezzo di cielo accaduto nella terra,” “A piece of Heaven fallen into the earth !”

I saw approaching, one, graceful and fair,
What other form could with that one compare?
'Twas even she—and then how dearly prized,
Came vows renewed, ne'er to be realized!
How oft, when sunset, fading, left this bay
In sudden darkness,* would I softly play
Beneath her window—improvise a strain,
Or in soft Tasso's poesy complain!
While o'er the wave the fisher at his toil
Baited the treacherous hook with flaming oil.†
We met in public, but we did not dare
To shew the secret of our mutual care,
Altho' my friends now warned me to beware;
And I knew well the wily Jesuits now
Had bound me, nor such marriage would allow.

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At length she left me! hard it is to part,
When love hath bound each young confiding heart;

* There is scarcely any twilight in these southern latitudes.

† The Neapolitan fishermen place a floating light of oil on the surface of the water at night, which attracts the fish into their nets.

When all the moments passed together seem
Like treasures found and scatter'd in a dream ;
When the lip breathes the heart-dividing word,
Which from all other tongues is calmly heard.
Ah ! can I now, though years have passed, describe
My feelings, when I watch'd her vessel glide
Far from these shores, far from my aching sight,
Which bade to love and hope a long good night !
Thus was my dream of happiness o'erthrown,
And to the world I then became unknown.
Ah ! when this garb and shatter'd form of clay
I fling aside upon my dying day,
May these last words of caution to thee seal
My pardon, when at Heaven's gate I kneel."

This device of entrapping young men into the priesthood without consulting their inclinations on the subject has been very commonly practised in the Church of Rome.—See "*Mémoires of Cioci.*"

RETROSPECT,

OR LINES ON MY SKETCH BOOK.

I HAVE been where the snow-capp'd mountains rise,
And where grapes are festoon'd beneath sunny skies ;
I've stray'd where the fir trees of each verdant glade,
The sheep and shepherd most gratefully shade,
Where the horn of the goatherd at sweet evening time,
Responded to notes from the far village chime ;
I've sailed upon lakes, where blue waters repose,
And traversed the land where the rapid Rhone flows :
Where weak woman's labour doth culture the soil,
And the bandit grows rich on his ill-gotten spoil !
I've seen ancient Rome, and Naples' bright bay,
And the spot where Pompeii in charred ruins lay.
Oh, then! all these scenes, that with pleasure I've view'd
With the ardour of youth, which can ne'er be renew'd,
I'll keep as life's treasures, and often will gaze
On rude outlines of bygone most joyous days :
Thus a journey abroad, in the sunshine of youth,
Forms pictures thro' life, when enshrined in the truth.

IN MEMORIAM.

WHERE the blue wave laves fair Italia's shore,
A sculptur'd monument doth still appear :
There rests in peace, till time shall be no more,
The dust of one, whom mem'ry doth revere.

There drooping willows wave at eventide,
When softest breezes temper southern heat ;
There English wand'ers rest them side by side,
And parting mourners strew the flowers sweet.*

*

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*

Parent, beloved, may we hereafter meet
In brighter scenes than those thro' which we passed ;
By "the still waters" find our calm retreat,
Safe gather'd to the heav'nly rest at last !

* The Protestant Cemetery at Leghorn.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE SEASONS.

WINTER.

How dreary the fields, and how cheerless the plain,
How silent the air and the grove ;
No longer the lark with his note hails the morn,
The landscapes no beauties disclose.

The trees lose their leaves, which are strewed on the
ground,
Or else are so changed to the sight,
That to many their hue suggests only gloom,
Instead of creating delight.

A few months will come and the scene will be changed,
The trees their rich dress will resume,
The garden be gay with the lily and rose,
The air filled with sweetest perfume.

Then fields will afford both pleasure and toil,
The thoughtful with thankfulness sing ;
And children the primrose and violet cull,
A sweet-scented offering to bring.

TO THE ROBIN.

PRETTY robin, hither come,
And make the rectory thy home ;
Daily here shalt thou be fed,
I will bring thee crumbs of bread :
Cheer us with thy morning song,
None will ever do thee wrong ;
Now the wintry winds do blow,
Storms of sleet and piercing snow,
Shelter warm and welcome find,
For all to robins here are kind.

TO

SPRING.

THIS is to you a fav'rite spot ;
Here fortune too has cast my lot,
Where flow'rs and fruits, combine their powers,
To sweeten life's more anxious hours.

Already has advancing spring,
Commenced her wonted gifts to fling:
The cluster'd snowdrop, drest in white,
Grows with the yellow aconite;
These with the crocus raise their heads
In groups, along our flower beds;
And violets with their richer bloom,
Do with their beauty add perfume;
The apple blossom with the pear,
Now show forth varied colours rare.
The blooming peach and nect'rine too,
Fresh marks of their sweet produce show;
Whose fruits by all are dearly prized,
When the prospect is realized.
These varied features of the year
Our grateful hearts should teach and cheer;
And daily lift our thoughts above
To nature's God—the God of love.

SUMMER.

THE INVITATION.

WHILE you're half choked with London smoke,
 We taste the purest breeze ;
We mark the modest flow'rets rise,
 And view the waving trees.

Nature puts on her gayest dress,
 So grateful to the sight ;
And all who know what pleasure is,
 Must feel no small delight.

Aurora with her smiling face,
 Peeps jocund o'er the hills ;
The sun e'en deep-sunk vales beneath
 With glorious splendour fills.

The lark ascends with quivering wing,
 And hails the cheerful day ;
While linnets tune their weaker notes,
 And sing from spray to spray.

Each bush now swarms with feather'd life,
And music fills the grove ;
Ripe fruits hang luscious from the tree,
And speak of peace and love.

Then come, dear friend ; leave, leave the town,
Our better joys to taste ;
And if you'll be advised by me,
You'll make no little haste !

EARLY RISING.

AN INCENTIVE.

WHILE drones lie dozing in their cells,
The bees are all alive,
And gathering sweets from morning flowers,
With honey fill their hive ;
Which of the two do you admire ?
The *drones* you must despise !
Your maxims borrow from the *bees*,
And with them timely rise.

THE EVENING WALK.

WHAT pleasure at the eventide
To ramble by the river side,*
T'inhale the cool refreshing breeze,
Laden with scent, from flow'ring trees ;
To greet the hour when day is done,
And mellow twilight hath begun.
In yonder pool the busy mill
Creates a whirling torrent still ;
While from every nook is heard,
The warblings of the evening bird.
Labour's stern sons now seek repose,
And the sweet flowers their petals close ;
So unrestrained we safe may rove,
And chatting pace the lane or grove :
Here, loosed from trammels fashion wears,
We think of neither dress nor cares ;
Our converse innocent and free,
On topics that are dear to me,

* The river Bure which winds through the two pretty villages of Horstead and Coltishall, Norfolk.

As pausing often we admire
Scenes which a painter might inspire !
Agree with me, then, that this hour
Is sweeter far in rural bower,
Than when to pleasures gay we roam,
Or dance beneath the gas-lit dome ;
Agree 'tis better here to stray
Than pacing with the vain and gay,
'Mid scenes which pall while we admire,
And where e'en melody doth tire !

AUTUMN.

THE WASP.

A PEST'RING wasp, long time had reign'd
Despotic in the garden,
In vain proprietors complain'd,
The wretch would not regard 'em.
He pierced the plum, he probed the peach,
The nect'rine sweet he tasted ;

Nay, all the fruit within his reach,
And half the produce wasted.
At length a phial caught his eye,
On a fruitful bough it hung,
Its tempting bait he fain would try,
And in he dipped his tongue !
But soon he found it was a trap,
With treach'rous sweetness fraught ;
Too late to 'scape from this mishap,
The felon fly was caught !
No more can he his saucy flight
Direct from room to room,
Or scare the fair from morn till night ;
He's gone to his last doom !

THE COTTAGERS' SHOW.

BRIGHT was the day, and cool the air,
For the village flower show,
And many anxious hastened there,
Their just award to know.

The useful tool, the frying pan,
Trays, kettles, pretty ware,
The spade, the hoe, the wat'ring can,
Were given here and there.

The Vicar praised their fruit and flowers,
Told how many a friend
Gave money, that their leisure hours
They might with profit spend.

The prizes they had fairly got,
He hoped each year to see
Increasing culture round each cot,
To mark their industry.

Just then a little incident
Was whisper'd thro' the crowd,
"How that a letter had been sent,
The vicar 'd read 't aloud.

"For th' best kept house, a lady gave
A shining piece of gold!"
Which village matrons longed to have,
The young ones and the old.

But how to settle it? 'Twere hard
 To carry out the plan!
 For ev'ry housewife had her word,
 And thus the matter ran.

Old Gaffer Gray stepped foremost bold,
 "His wife was ill," he said,
 "But sure, she'd scrubbed till she grew old,
 And would till she was dead!"

Then Mrs. Pitcher merg'd in sight,
 "Her pots and pans," she cried,
 "Were just like silver, fair and bright,
 And form'd her daily pride."

Then Susan Glass her casements praised,
 They were a perfect sight,
 Although they were not always glazed,
 But stuffed with rags, snow white!

Theresa Tidy would compete,
 With all who'd gone before,
 Said that a dumpling you might eat
 From off her cleanly floor!

Rebecca Rush declar'd 'twas bosh
To prate of knife and fork !
When clothes snow white, her weekly wash,
Were quite the village talk.

At length so high the hubbub rose,
You could not hear a word !
The Vicar then did interpose,
And not a sound was heard.

“ My friends wait patiently, and then
With counsel I'll decide,
Who shall receive these shillings ten,
And prove her husband's pride.

“ The well kept home, the cleanly board,
The tidy, smiling wife,
Are worth more than a miser's hoard,
And cheer a man thro' life.

“ Then take this gentle hint and try
To make each village home
Pleasant, and neat—and not a sty—
Then husbands will not roam.” *

* The little incident above narrated occurred in a Norfolk village.

TO MY LOST BULLFINCH.

ALTHO' to humble dust consign'd,
Thy winning ways I keep in mind ;
And tho' now from misfortune free,
Still "Bully" I repine for thee !
For thy sweet pipe, alas ! is mute,
Once soft and dulcet as the flute,
And flutters not that pretty wing,
When for a seed, I bade thee sing :
And tho' in spring the night bird's note
Doth sweetly thro' the woodlands float,
"Meet me by moonlight" ne'er can be
Surpassed, as it was piped by thee.
And tho' we praise the social dove,
Cooing its pretty tale of love,
Yet "C'est l'amour" was all thy own,
No bird could vie with its sweet tone !
Farewell, of bullfinches the pride,
I would that thou should'st not have died,
Nor know I 'mid the feather'd race,
Another bird to take thy place.

NOTHING TO DO!

NOTHING to do!—oh, dear, each word
Is melancholy—nay, absurd!
Nothing to do!—with God's own light,
And death approaching, as the night!
Nothing to do!—close to your door
Nature hath wonders; go, explore!
Nothing to do!—true, snow and rain
May drive you to the house again!
Nothing to do!—books there you'll find,
Affording food to every mind.
The turning lathe, the useful tool,
The pencil, carpenter's sure rule,
Which ev'ry hour resource will prove
To those who self improvement love.
Nothing to do!—some absent friend
Looks for a letter, neatly penned.
Nothing to do!—who hears that phrase?
He who beholds man's fleeting days,
He writes it down!—recorded there,

When the Judge comes—how will you fare ?
Go, and seek out the poor, the weak,
In cheering accents, haste to speak ;
Give of your wealth, obey the call,
And blessings on your head will fall.
Nothing to do, will henceforth be,
No vain excuse, now urged by thee.

THE EARLY TRAIN.

HUMOROUS.

“ WHO is that tapping at the door ? ”
A servant whispers, “ half-past four ! ”
“ Why surely ’tis not time to rise ?
Do take that candle from my eyes !
Must I get up ?—then farewell sleep ”
And blinking from my bed I creep.
“ Now place my clothes all on one chair,
Find me a brush, and dress my hair ;
’Twixt lights one looks much like a hag !

Now you can lock the carpet bag,"
Which rebels with the ardent strain,
As if 'twould ne'er be closed again !
My bunch of keys falls on the floor,
We search for them at half-past four,
And all around looks dim and dark,
The damsel's wick emits a spark :
" Where are your snuffers ?—broken loose !
Then look for them at once, you goose."
Somebody *trips up* on the floor,
An *early train* is such a bore !
Now swallow coffee boiling hot !
As if Macadamed throat you'd got ;
And up you hear the carriage drive,
When someone calls out " half past five."
" My handkerchief I've left in bed ;
This handbag's heavier than lead !
What can you have put within it ?
Early trains are to a minute !
My glove is torn quite to a rag !
The other dropp'd into my bag."
" Your portmanteau no name has on it !"
" Hang the valise !—find my bonnet !
My nice air cushion (lately bought)
Has *sprung a leak*, and come to nought,

Umbrellas, shawls, and rugs, strap up,
And don't forget the *bird* and *pup* !
Give me them in my arms, dear Sue,
And then I'll tell you what to do ;
My travelling flask has fallen down ,
Can't be replac'd for half-a-crown !
And all the sherry's on the gravel !
Oh ! the cost and toil of travel !
Coachman, go on—don't lose more time,
For to be late would be a crime,
After being called at half-past four !
These early trains are such a bore ! ”

* * * * *

As we near the distant station,
Rise up fear and consternation !
Some empty cabs and busses void,
Promote a feeling unenjoyed !
A cabman slyly winks his eye,
Points to the station, then whisks by !
“ Oh, horrid wretch ! what can he mean ? ”

We're overcome with fear and spleen !
"Why !—actually there's no one there !"
We gallop up—the porters stare.
"Is the train gone ?" we frantic cry,
Official nods—we wipe our eye.
"Oh, dismal 'waiting room,' we're thine,
In thee we chafe till half-past nine !"

THE FASHIONABLE CHAPEL.

LONDON SKETCH.

'Twas filled to overflow,
Many highly born
Who, not twelve hours ago,
The opera did adorn.

No fin'ry laid aside,
Gay flowers deck'd each brow ;
All still in stately pride,
Yet seem'd quite humble now.

The gesture and the heart,
May they be found alike ;
God can alone impart
The power to do right.

If God's grace be not there,
The fair girl walks away,
Her heart untouch'd by prayer,
In truth we're bound to say.

Unless God's grace be there,
The elder dame sweeps on,
Of danger unaware,
Tho' her time is nearly gone.

The world's a bosom friend,
From which she's loth to part,
Clings to it till the end,
And keeps God from her heart.

Unless God's grace be there,
The spendthrift walks away,
Puts by his book of prayer,
Then desecrates God's day.

By betting book and match
Conscience is made blind ;
And the evil one would snatch
Good precepts from his mind.

Except God's grace be there,
The miser on God's floor
Counts dividend and share,
And covets gold the more.

He gives a paltry coin,
And thinks he's done his part,
In Christian prayer to join—
Though with a worldly heart.

But if God's grace be there,
The highest in the state
May pour the humblest prayer
On entering God's gate.

Riches, or rank he views,
But lent him for a space ;
Rightly he both would use
During his pilgrim race.

“ Oh, thou, who offer’th prayer,
Thy congregation’s friend ;
Their precious souls thy care,
May grace on thee descend.

“ May hearts each Lord’s day taught,
Be warmed to sacred love ;
And by thy precepts brought
To better joys above.*”

THE FOX HUNT.

A CHECK.

(*March 23rd, 1869.*)

I SAW upon the river’s brink
Ten gallant steeds and men ;
Ah ! who would dream, or who would think,
What could befall them then !

* Should the preceding be deemed *uncharitable*, the writer wishes to state that the *ideas* were taken from the preacher on one occasion when she attended the chapel in question.

Young life was there, and vig'rous health,
With all this world could give ;
Death seem'd distant—station and wealth
Proclaim'd 'twas bliss to live.

They talk'd of what a glorious day
They'd chosen for the hunt ;
How Reynard kept the dogs at bay—
Then shouted for the punt.

“Hallo ! there, gard'ner, make good haste,
And bring the boat across ;
Our time we can't afford to waste,
For that would cause us loss.”

Again they talk'd how each would dine
To-morrow at the hall ;
Discuss the dinner and the wine,
And “Johnson's awkward fall !”

Then praised some beauty who charmed
The heart of gallant knight ;
The needle gun, which men have harmed,
In th' Franco-German fight.

The best cheroot, the billiard game,
At which they'd mark'd some score ;
Then politics, and queer nickname
In *Punch*, which Gladstone bore.

Yes, many things they might have said
In that brief halting place ;
Less than some minutes—four were dead !
Alas ! that fatal chase !

The dark, doom'd freight then glided on !
A neigh'bouring clock struck three,
And when five minutes more were gone,
Ah me ! what did I see !

A playful colt of dappled grey,
Swayed over on one side ;
Kick'd his friend, a high-bred bay,
His master's pet and pride !

Then followed terror ! soothing word
Fell useless in that hour ;
There was no outer rail or cord
To restrain the horses' power.

A second passed, then came a shriek ;
The punt turned on one side,
And men and horses, strong or weak,
Were plunged into the tide !

Then came life's struggle !—the proud steeds
Forgot their masters kind ;
They got entangled in the weeds,
A speedy death to find !

The 'cumbered swimmer strove in vain
To reach the turf bound shore ;
Threw up his arms with cry of pain,
Then sank to rise no more.

But on the bottom of the boat
Scrambled three half-drowned men ;
Others awhile were kept afloat,
Till aid had rescued them.

* * * * *

A lady chats in yonder hall,
Gay friends around her sit ;
They talk of an approaching ball,
With merry laugh and wit.

A county belle, too, muses on
Some dress she plans to wear ;
The gems which last time brightly shone,
Mixed with her dark brown hair.

A manly form, a beaming face,
Appeared above them all ;
That morn he'd gone to join the chase,
T' return at evening fall.

Alas ! he will *no more* return,
Except with shrouded eyes !
A maiden's love, the others learn,
Taught by her phrensied cries.

Ah me ! he hears not the wild grief
Of those who 'round him stand :
He with the hunt's most gallant chief
Are gone t' the better land.

* * * * *

Yonder's a cottage in the wood,
With verdant creepers twined ;
Plants which the winter's frost have stood,
And brav'd December wind.

Experienced eyes were there to watch,
And skilful hands to prune ;
The earliest rays of sun to catch,
And share a warmth like June.

A wife spreads there a simple meal,
And stirs a bright wood fire ;
Scents from her pretty casement steal,
From plants which all admire.

She listens for a much lov'd voice,
The well known sound of feet,
Which always make her heart rejoice,
In that lone and calm retreat.

Alas ! her husband and his son
Will tend their plants no more :
Hence the cry of a widowed one
'Scapes from the open door.

Great God soothe Thou the widow's grief ;
Give calmness—sweep away
The burden, and impart relief
To all stricken hearts this day.

Sir Charles Slingsby and two other gentlemen, all met with a watery grave while crossing the river in a punt, in Yorkshire, on the above-mentioned day, in the heat of the chase. The poor gardener and his son who brought the boat across, shared the same fate.

TO DISAPPOINTMENT.

Go disappointment far away,
I hate thy dismal locks of grey ;
I'll fly each spot wherein thou art,
With thee, dire shade, I'll have no part.
I will not lean on this world's joys,
Dream that of gold are made its toys ;
Or build on grandeur, wealth, renown,
For thee to come and topple down.
Nay, shake not thy long phiz at me,
For I would live from fancies free ;
Disarm thee by submission's tear,
And shun thee when thou wouldst appear,
Prepare my heart for yon bright home,
Where disappointment cannot come.

TO VEXATION.

Go, go, thou little vexing ill,
Dare not my tranquil breast to fill.
Oh may sweet reason's sober view,
Arrest the tears my cheeks bedew.
Bethink me in my passage here,
Much to contend with will appear.
I'll firmness learn ; such petty woe
Ought not to give my breast one throe.
When we feel no greater sorrow,
Little ills importance borrow.
Away, away then foolish grief,
And make thy presence ever brief.

CHINAMANIA.

A CITIZEN with numerous brood,
Who'd worked through life to get them food,
Grew rich ; and thought he would divide
His fortune 'mongst them ere he died.
The porcelain first of all he'd sell,
Knowing that it would pay him well :
Novelty had seiz'd upon the nation,
And china was the new sensation.
Forthwith in haste was ordered down
A first-rate artist straight from town,
Who group'd some of the items rare ;
And then came a photographer,
Who, in less than no time, brought to light,
Fac-similes to charm the sight,
To illustrate a catalogue !
Which did not want an epilogue !
Then salesman stepped into his box,
And for a week was heard such knocks
As spirits are supposed to give,
When they would chat with friends who live.

Then rushed in eager, *without tails*,
Some *Chinamen* who frequent sales ;
Turning about the dainty ware,
Till salesman shout^{ed}, "Have a care!"
Here Dresden groups stood forth to view,
Bedeck'd with wreath and love knots blue.
"Capo di Monte,"* rich in art,
Came next to play the tempter's part.
Sèvres, too, showed some splendid things,
Which well might grace the courts of kings.
Here Lowestoft ware did faintly shine,
Ta'en from a now exhausted mine.†
Chelsea, our ancient soldiers' home,
Where many a star and crutch are shown,
Boasts also of ceramic art ;
Her wares were found in every mart ;
And cups whence beauties sipped and smiled,—
And so men's foolish hearts beguiled!—
Reached prices far beyond their worth ;

* Charles the 3rd, King of Naples, caused a manufactory for this beautiful china to be erected at Capo di Monte, a place near Naples—hence its name.

† The manufactory of Lowestoft, Suffolk, was closed about the year 1803, on account of the fine clay of which this ware is composed, being exhausted ; it is said that this was the first manufactory of china established in England.

Of money then there seem'd no dearth,
While knowing ones, conscious of power,
Nodded and bid from hour to hour ;
And others, who had pockets empty,
Look'd just as if they'd money plenty.
But 'mong the crowd that filled the sale,
Brokers and fair ones did prevail ;
Contentions sharp made each to quirk,
And feel that it was hungry work !
So *these* munched biscuits on the sly,
While *those* *fed* at the inn hard by ;
Returning with a vigour true,
Their bids and nodding to renew.
At length the china all *knock'd down*,
Broken in *lots*, not *bits*, I own,
We all departed ; some in pain,
Lest lots should fail to sell again ;
Others to think they'd gain'd a prize,
To be a sore in envious eyes !

A "*ROYAL*" TALE.

A COUPLE by the London train,
Came down to view the "Barmouth" main,
And being social, pleasant, loyal,
Took up their quarters at the "Royal ;"
They dined, and then with sleep opprest,
Betook themselves to early rest.
It happened that a widowed bird—
Whose Martin mate now lay interred—
Slept next room to the sober pair,
And soon she wished herself elsewhere ;
For between—oh ! sad disaster—
There was only lath and plaster !
Scarce had she sunk in calm repose,
Ere a most dismal sound arose ;
Something between a grunt and groan,
Issued from the adjoining room.
The widow turned her round and round,
She scarce could understand the sound :
"It is too bad," at length she said,
"Not to get rest e'en in my bed ;

‘Out upon’ these noisy sleepers,
I’ll try and open this *one’s* peepers.”
With this she rose, and to the grate
Rushed in a semi-rabid state !
Snatched thence the shovel and the tongs,
And imitated Chinese gongs !
The couple, roused by such a clatter,
Screamed out in concert, “What’s the matter ?”
“Matter enough,” the dame replied,
“Methought with fear I should have died :
Dreamed I was walking thro’ ‘the Zoo,’
And met a bear which moaned like you !
I tell you, that unless this cease,
I’ll rouse the house and shout ‘Police.’”
The wife to “Soothing Syrup” used,
Always a lady, tho’ abused,
Said, “Madam, my husband snores, its true,
And much regrets disturbing you ;
I pray you, therefore, end this riot,
And he’ll endeavour to be quiet.”
The widow gave a parting bang,
Which through the “Royal” precincts rang ;
Then quite worn out by ding, dong, stroke,
Slept till her *namesake* birds awoke.
Next night the nuisance was repeated,

Nor had the enemy retreated ;
But kept on clanging as before,
Not heeding those who did implore.
At length the couple tired out,
For quiet lodgings looked about.

* * * * *

I've heard it said, the "*Martin*" bird
No creature ever will disturb,
As they bring peace where'er they come
To build their neatly plastered home.
Not so the "*Martin*" in my tale,
To quiet folk come down by rail.
So masters of hotels take warning,
And if you would be money earning,
Don't suffer *martin* birds to rest,
Deny to each and all a nest ;
For tho' they punctually may pay,
They'll drive all other birds away !

CONUNDRUM.

I WALKED into the garden,
And there I saw it grow ;
I sought for an amusement,
Secured it for the show !
I planned to go a journey,
And still I asked its aid ;
I then climbed up to reach it,
And did not feel afraid !
'Tis true I've turned it inside out,
And burnt it in the fire,
And when I was a naughty child
It caused my bitter ire !
I've heard it said—"in fighting
It makes a grievous smart ;"
And yet it helps in spreading
Light o'er every part.
It keeps a check on money,
The large coins and the small ;

Its form's oft plain, oft funny,
To suit the tastes of all.
Man's dearest prize it may contain,
Yet, on his funeral day,
Under another garb and name,
'Twill carry him away.

ABERGELEY.

A RECORD OF AUGUST 20TH, 1868.

HE knelt in prayer—a journey lay before him—
He knelt to God, how humbly to adore Him.
The lordly man, with limbs matur'd and strong,
Pour'd forth his soul, then hymn'd "The Angels' Song."
Bright years to come, with sunny vesta rose,
And all his thoughts breathed peace and calm repose.
He pray'd for all—his son in youth's first day,
That man's arch tempter should not make him stray;
That his fair daughter, wedded and belov'd,
Might be a matron rich in virtue prov'd!
"Great God! be willing such gifts to bestow,"

Cried the strong man in spirit meek and low ;
And then regretful memory would rise
Of sins, for which he vow'd some sacrifice.
He left the Church ; the day's sweet prime and night
Succeeded with bright sun, then starry light ;
He join'd his lov'd home circle, till would cease
Their nightly prayer, and all should sleep in peace.
How little thought they, as each bent the knee,
That evening was the last they all would see !
How little did they know that one long grave,
His ashes and their ashes, soon would have,
Mingled like sand !—the master, servant, all—
And make a tale the nation to appal !
Yet it fell so ! Each carriage onward sped,
While noon's fierce sunshine pour'd from overhead.
The train flew on !—the lovely landscape glowed,
The shores of ocean reached, and rocky road,
Then came a sound of doom, an awful crash,
A poison'd vapour rose, a lurid flash !
And then what once was beauty, youth, and pride,
In one charred mass fell silently and died.
Oh God of mercy ! yet some few were left
To tell the tale, or comfort the bereft !
And may we hope that those alike who shared
This awful end, were not all unprepared

To meet Thee, and will welcome the glad sound
Of angel's trump, which calls them from the ground,
Each in his proper form, unsoiled and pure,
And fitted like Thy kingdom to endure !
But what is that they gather from the rail ?
Bright gems and gold so malleable, not frail,
Looking like native nugget, or rough stone,
To tool or smelting flame alike unknown !
Could these last season glisten at a ball,
When lights upon a graceful form did fall ?
Did envy's glance covet the costly work ?
Had these for years form'd themes for female talk ?
Was it with these the bride bedeck'd her charms,
With these encircled snowy neck and arms ?
While the fond husband, with admiring eyes,
In courtly circles showed his blushing prize.
What labour, money, time, hath been bestowed
On the misshapen mass found on the road ! *

* Lord and Lady Farnham, well known as excellent persons in every relation in life were among the 33 victims of this awful catastrophe. They were travelling from London to Dublin, and when near Abergeley, in Wales, the train came in contact with several cars containing petroleum, which had broken loose from a shunted goods train, and made their way down the incline, up which the London train was advancing—which was instantly set on fire, involving the above mentioned sacrifice of life.

It so happened at the time of the accident, Lady Farnham held in her hand a dressing bag containing the family jewels, which were afterwards found on the rails in the state above described. The undistinguishable remains of those who thus perished were all interred together in the churchyard of the adjoining village.

* * * * *

There is a lovely spot!—in it appears
A village church, grey with the lapse of years :
There the Welsh peasant rests, and flowers sweet
Twine round, to deck this solemn calm retreat ;
And there a record carved in stone doth stand,
A sad memorial of that fated band ;
And travellers for many a future year,
Will whisper “ Abergeley ” with a tear.

THE BLIND BOY'S BASKET.

“ Oh ! take this to my mother dear,
The basket I have made ;
Her heart will be rejoiced, I know,
To see I've learnt a trade.

“ Oh ! take this to my mother dear,
These osiers I have twined ;

'Twill serve to bring her poor blind boy
The oftener to her mind.

“ Before I left her lowly cot,
All thro' the livelong day,
I sat a useless cumberer,
And long'd to work for pay.

“ To get me clothes, and scanty food,
My loving mother tried ;
Early and late she toil'd for me,
Her only boy and pride.

“ But now I'll try and work for her,
Since now I have a trade ;
And few will e'er refuse to buy
The baskets I have made.

“ I cannot see the bright blue sky,
Or gay bloom on the trees,
But I can touch the silken flowers,
Which scent the summer breeze.

“And with my fingers I can trace,
The words of Truth divine ;
And listen to our pastor’s voice,
And make his precepts mine.

“I also join our Sunday choir,
And think how angels bright,
May then be singing in the land
Where darkness shall be light !

“To you, kind friends, who plac’d me here,
How much I owe indeed ;
Feeling so useless at my home,
Oft caused my heart to bleed.

“But now in useful company,
Tho’ blind I sit at ease,
And work away as blithe as they,
My master well to please.

“Then take this little basket home,
Not for its cost or worth ;
I know ’twill please my mother dear,
My dearest friend on earth.”*

* These lines were suggested to the writer by the request of a poor blind boy, while visiting the Asylum for the “Indigent Blind” in Norwich.

LEGEND OF REEDHAM,

NORFOLK.

A WICKED lord of olden time,
Had done some most atrocious crime ;
And tho' he was both rich and great,
The mob broke into his estate.
Hauling him forth, both neck and crop,
Nor prayers, nor tears, could make them stop.
Police were scanty in those days,
So people's minds were all ablaze !
Lynch law was rife, and by that rule,
The rabble roar'd "to hang the fool !"
When lo ! some friend to pity mov'd,
(One, who no doubt the lord had lov'd)
Cried, "Give him a chance," this friend in need,
"And let him float upon a reed ;
If he gets safe—life's accorded !
And if he sinks—crime's rewarded !

Tie round his waist a right good lot,
And let him drift to any spot !”

* * * * *

This notion for the trembling wretch,
The people’s minds appear’d to catch ;
So reedy bed, without more bother,
They made for this poor erring brother.
Tied fast to these, a *pithy* plan !
Splash went this bundle of a man !
The river heaved its turbid breast,
And on and on the frail bark prest.
The fishes never touched “ my lord ; ”
His wicked flesh e’en they abhorred.
Perchance some kindly angel saw
The floating victim of lynch law,
And, thoughtful of the tiny span,
Allotted on the earth to man,
Granted him life a little longer,
That on his misdeeds he might ponder.
May be was heard repentant prayer,

Raised upwards as he floated there.
Whether or no, some helping hand
Brought the doomed culprit back to land !

* * * * *

Of the sequel, but this is known :
The vital spark was still his own !
And fain we'd hope his crime and pride,
He left behind him on the tide.
Thus *Reedham* was the favour'd place,
Where a poor sinner found his grace !

CHOOSING A WEDDING PRESENT.

WHAT to give my cousin ?
Things I see, some dozen.
A handsome Sèvres clock,
Just taken into stock ;

Inkstand—with blotting book,
Broke out in studs—do look !
Gilt cupid ! bearing rings ;
A Davenport, with springs.
A Franco-German fan,
Loot, from poor Sedan !
Tea-cup, with plate attached,
Just out, and can't be matched.
Croquet—her fav'rite game,
At which she got much fame.
(Tho' Badmington, well played,
Throws croquet into shade.)
A pair of racks, for bills,
Two shepherds, holding spills.
Lowestoft set for tea,
Costly, too much for me !
Ground glass, for Wenham ice,
My sympathies entice.
Footmuff, defence from damp ;
Our good Queen's reading lamp.
Steel " Chatelaine " for her side,
Young housewife's daily pride ;
Or dressing bag with fittings,
Useful for her "*flittings* !"
Bread trencher, ivory knife,

(Good present for a wife.)
Or glass with silver cow,
A butter dish to show!

* * * * *

Now here's a photo book,
To lock as well as hook;
The very thing to buy,
Handsome, none can deny!
Moreover, plac'd behind,
A golden key you'll find;
Use it, and very soon
You'll hear a merry tune!
When listening, she can look
On friends throughout the book;
And in that cheerful guise,
Th' originals surprise!
I, too, would like to prove
My friendship, if not *love*,
By slyly slipping in
My portrait, to begin!

“ROUGH.”

“The dog will have his day.”—*Hamlet*.

Short ears,
Pink nose,
Black eyes,
Calm repose.

White paws,
Rough hair,
Fierce looks,
Like a bear.

Hungry is,
Wants grub!
Saturday,
Into tub.

Washed clean,
Looks white.
Goes out,
Wants to fight!

Gets licked,
Pluck shown
Finds solace
In a bone.

Sees Arthur,
Gets up,
Runs round
Like a pup.

Lies down,
Sleep tries
No use,
Sting the flies !

Wakes up,
Gives growl,
Gets kicked,
Begins to howl !

Pony comes
With car ;
Dog waits
For mamma !

Village "pest"
Tempts to roam ;
Three days,
Stays from home.

Ma troubled,
"Where's Rough?"
Sends out
In a huff.

"Rough" back,
Dirty, thin!
Locked up,
And kept in.

EARL SCREW AND THE DOCTOR.

EARL Screw was a very rich man,
Many thousands he had a year ;
And yet it was always his plan
To be ever saving and near.

He'd heard, that not far from his door
Resided a doctor so willing ;
Who cured all the ailing and poor,
And never demanded a shilling !

From nine to eleven each day,
He saw all the crippled and blind ;
And as they'd no money to pay,
They each left a blessing behind.

Earl Screw had a halt in his leg,
And his eyelids a red circle wore ;
So he thought he would stealthily beg
For relief, at his good neighbour's door.

Then he put on a shabby old hat,
And looked up some seedy old clothes ;
And, getting his story quite pat,
He hobbled away on his toes ;

Then join'd with a poor tatter'd crew,
The aged, the halt, and the blind ;
And altho' they disgusted his view,
Yet to saving he still was inclined.

Said the doctor, "Good man, 'tis your turn,
Don't stand in the passage, I beg;
I see how your eyelids must burn,
And something is wrong with your leg!

"For advice you've nothing to pay,
This medicine at night you must take,
I'll cure you without much delay;"
Earl Screw bow'd, with shiver and shake.

He went there again and again,
And received of this doctor so kind,
Of sundry drugs many a grain,
And speedy relief did he find.

It happened the doctor one night
Was called from his home far away,
And returned with the first morning light,
On foot the last part of his way.

Just turning a corner, he spied,
Drawn up in a bye narrow lane,
A carriage emblazoned each side,
And a footman with bright-headed cane.

Two steppers were pawing the ground,
The coachman in wig looked first-rate ;
The doctor this sight did astound,
So gaudy this gilding and state.

When, lo ! from the carriage stepped down
The old beggar he'd pitied before ;
And then he observ'd with a frown,
He was making his way to *his* door.

The doctor turned round and departed,
So eager he now was to meet
This old sinner, so mean and low-hearted,
Who used such endeavours to cheat.

With the crippled and sick surely came,
Earl Screw with the halt in his leg ;
And received all his medicine the same—
With a whine, like the vagrants who beg.

“ Stop, stop, my old man, step in here,”
The irritated doctor now said,
“ I wish to examine, quite near,
Your limb, and your eyes, *once* so red.”

Earl Screw, never dreaming his cheat
Was detected, walk'd where he was told ;
But he soon wished to beat a retreat,
When he found he was thoroughly "sold !"

" You owe me a thirty pound fee,"
Said the doctor with stern, clouded brow,
" To *you* that a trifle must be,
As your mode of conveyance I know.

" Go ! give alms to those suff'ring poor,
And wipe out this grovelling stain ;
Write a cheque for my fee, and this door
I hope you won't darken again !"

THE GRANDMAMA.

A SKETCH.

THERE was a face, on which old Time
Had lightly carv'd his eighty years :
Fair had that face been in its prime,
And few the inroads made by tears.

A snow-white cap the widow wore
On hair still whiter than its thread ;
A sombre shawl her shoulders bore,
A rich black dress for one long dead.
I saw her in her easy chair
Knitting to aid some cotter's child,
Whose great delight would be to wear
The fabric, which her hours beguil'd.
Sweet, and urbane to all around,
To do good seem'd her sole desire ;
While grandchildren would cluster round,
And chat to "granny" by her fire.
Daily the blessed Word of God,
In faith and prayer, she'd closely scan ;
On Sunday, too, she slowly trod
The path where younger footsteps ran,
Eager to reach the holy fane.
When the blest bread and wine were given,
She never stay'd for cold or rain ;
The Church porch seem'd the gate of Heaven.
With gradual, unmask'd decay,
In loving arms she laid her down ;
She'd sought thro' life the living way,
And found in death a heavenly crown.

SACRED.

DAILY LIFE.

“Have I not remembered Thee on my bed, and thought upon Thee when I was waking.”—Psalm lxiii, 7. (*Prayer Book Version.*)

DAYBREAK.

HOPE.

I SAW the sun rise o'er the sea,
 Heralding in a glorious day ;
A harbinger, it seemed to me,
 Of pressing cares all passed away.

The day advanced, no cloud o'erhead ;
 The woodland scene lay bright and still ;
Until the star of evening shed
 Its mellow light o'er wave and hill.

A glorious hope arose within :
 I thought of that eternal rest,
Where, pure, unstain'd, and free from sin,
 The righteous will on high be blest.

I thought—then bent the knee in prayer,
 For all the friends I love below ;
That they might all a portion share
 In what our God will then bestow.

I prayed—if future days should come,—
For peace, for blessing, and repose ;
Till ripe in faith, the silent tomb,
Should o'er our tranquil ashes close.

TO PIETY.

INVOCATION.

COME Piety, thou heaven-born maid,
Come with thy vesture white array'd ;
Come with thy humble mien and eye,
With heart uplifted to the sky !

Come when the morn begins to peep,
And rouse me from soft dreamy sleep ;
Be with me, when my knees I bend
To God, my Father and my Friend.

And when I court the world's gay smile—
Oft times so false, and full of guile—
Oh ! seal my lips, when, frail and weak,
Of others' failings I would speak.

In God's own temple be thou found,
Keep thoughts from wandering around,
And tune my voice that I may raise
Glad hymns and anthems in His praise.

When nature rich, I would explore,
May I in all things God adore ;
And when His gifts I taste and feel,
Thy presence then I know is real.

Or when the starry heavens I view,
Ever the same, yet ever new,
And contemplation comes—sweet power
Be with me in that tranquil hour.

Then when I kneel to close the day,
Still light me with thy soft'ning ray ;
Pervade my latest thought, till sleep
Shall o'er my senses gently creep.

HYMN BEFORE SLEEP.

'NEATH Thy protection, O my God,
No danger can I fear ;
I sink to sleep, for well I know
Good angels hover near.
And when fleet years are come and gone,
Oh may I find that rest,
Which Thou hast promised, thro' Thy Son,
T' the ransomed and the blest.

THE MORNING BIRDS.

THANKFULNESS.

“List ye how nature with ten thousand tongues
Begins the grand thanksgiving ;
Hail, all hail !
Ye tenants of the forest and the field.”—*Smart*.

THE young birds praise Thee, Heavenly One,
Now at the rising brilliant sun ;
How sweet their warblings must appear
To every well attuned ear :
Their homage at Thy throne they pay,
Shall man be grateful less than they ?

When the fond parent birds I see
Feeding their offspring on the tree ;
Giving them all they seek or find,
Can I forget those parents kind,
Whom Thou didst in Thy mercy give,
Parent of all, in whom we live ?

And, later, when the new fledged brood,
Learn of themselves to find their food ;
To see them mount and joyous soar,
While instinct tells them to adore ;
Shall I, when at my morning meal,
Forget like thankfulness to feel ?

THE BRIDE'S PRAYER.

STEADFASTNESS.

“As the sun ariseth in the high heaven ; so is the beauty of a good wife in the ordering of her house.”—Ecclesiasticus xxvi, 16.

“GREAT God ! Thy will be mine : keep me aright,
And should I meet with canker-worm or blight
In this new stage of pilgrimage, yet still
Teach me each untried duty to fulfil,
And not dispute, or murmur at, Thy will.
The ‘golden city’* may I keep in view,
For that high prize I start in life anew.
New cares, new duties, now surround my life,
I leave my home, and take the name of wife.

* “And the street of the city was pure gold.”—Rev. xxi, 21.

Pure childhood may be placed beneath my care,
The sick or needy claim my time to share ;
New duties in my household may appear,
New work start up with each succeeding year.
In each perplexing thought, I'll look to thee,
And then no duties can encumber me ;
The faithful Mary be my pattern sure,
And then each cross, I meekly shall endure."

THE SPIRIT LENT TO EARTH.

RESIGNATION.

A GENTLE spirit left its native home,
And came to earth a little while to roam ;
I call'd it my own child—the casket drest,
In which the spirit briefly deigned to rest ;
I clasp'd it to my heart, and kissed away
The tears which moisten life's first weary day ;
I show'd it then around, and with earth's pride,
Caressed, admir'd, plac'd it at my side ;

At early dawn my waking thoughts were still
With the sweet form, that did my bosom fill ;
At night, again, my last and fervent prayer
Was, " Lord, take this, my treasure to Thy care."
A stormy cloud appear'd, and my sweet flower
Was drench'd and beaten by a sudden shower :
I prayed for it, I bent the humble knee,
And the young life at length was granted me.

* * * * *

Time came and went,—rejoicing in my flower,
No other storm seem'd o'er my path to lower ;
I pressed it to my heart ; " Oh, life," I cried,
" Had been a blank, if thou, my child, had died."
Alas ! ere long the herald voice of doom,
Which speaks to man to warn him of the tomb,
Sent death, to take my treasure lov'd away,
To plant it in the realms of endless day.
Then bowed to earth, with weeping sore opprest,
I cried, " Oh, that I too could be at rest ;
Oh ! why, oh ! why was such a treasure given,
To be so early snatch'd from earth to Heaven ?"

Then did a voice reply, "Frail child of clay,
Mine was the gift, My will doth take away !
Would you, for your own selfish love, retain
A fragile form, destined for years of pain ?
Would you, now she has anchor'd on the shore,
Where storms thro' which she pass'd can never pour,
Draw her to earth to be with you once more ?
She's joined My train of white-robed saints on high ;
Soon you will tread life's path more joyfully,
Thinking her spirit shares My peaceful home,
And cries to you, ' Mother, dear mother, come.'
The chorus swells, and you may join it when
I call you from the low abodes of men—
Wait prayerfully and patiently till then."

ANOTHER YEAR.

ANOTHER year ! Ah, who may know
How much of weariness and woe,
What cause of many a bitter tear,
Lies hid within—another year ?

Another year! How many a friend,
With whom our soul now seems to blend,
May from our circle disappear,
Swept off before—another year?

Another year! Hours pass away,
And bring the close of life's brief day;
And we whose hearts are beating here,
May sleep in dust—another year!

“SCRIPTURE.”—DAILY.

I'LL see what He will say to me,
For I am frail and weak;
I'll see what He will say to me,
For I would counsel seek.

Whene'er I ope this sacred page,
Some cheering word I find,
Which quiets strife's unseemly rage,
And calms and soothes the mind.

My chart, my guide, my Gilead's balm,
Oh, blessed, sacred text !
Thou shield 'gainst life's endang'ring harm,
Thou cure for spirit vexed !

"Bear up, and on thyself depend,"
The thoughtless worldling cries :
I take my bible, and a friend
At once before me lies.

"Oh, taste and see," for there the Lord
Awaits thee ev'ry day ;
Gives counsel, thro' that blessed word,
Go seek it—read and pray.

ANSWERED PRAYER.

OF OLD.

ASSYRIA'S hosts embattled lay,
Round Sion's threaten'd walls ;
The king disheartened at the sight,
His chiefs to counsel calls.

He bids them mark the locust swarm,
Which covers wide the plain ;
And argues as if all was lost,
And all resistance vain.

Hilkiah, Joah—Shebna, too—
Confess the danger great,
But how avert the rising storm,
Or save the sinking state ?

Not one could tell ! Rabshakeh's voice,
The firmest heart appals ;
A gen'ral trembling thrills the youths
Who thinly man the walls !

With eager haste the monarch sends,
To urge the prophet's prayer ;
All hope in human aid gives up,
And casts on God his care.

What spear and shield could not effect,
That humble prayer obtained ;
Sennach'rib's host was all destroyed,
The trusting king still reigned.*

* "Hezekiah, mourning, sendeth to Isaiah to pray for them." 2 Kings,
xix.

ANSWERED PRAYER.

RECENT.

A LITTLE simple prayer is heard,
As much by God above,
As a nation's gen'ral thanksgiving,
To show its loyal love.*

Praises for all our mercies past,—
Blessed be His holy name,—
He accepts from prince or peasant,
If the *motive* be the same.

Oh! ye who undervalue prayer,
Think of that royal wife,
Who pleaded with God the Father,
To spare her husband's life!†

* Written on the eve of the great Day of Thanksgiving, after the recovery of the Prince of Wales from a most dangerous illness.

This imposing service was held in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, February 27th, 1872. The Queen being present with her court, and many hundreds of her loyal and loving subjects.

† This touching incident of the Princess going to Sandringham Church to pray for the recovery of her husband, when he was in the most imminent danger, is well known.

Who set so bright example,
Talked of from pole to pole ;
Making each creed and nation
Pray like one living soul !

Scoffers, your sneers are all in vain :
Doubt not God's holy word :
Events are not produced by chance—
See how faith's prayer is heard !

WORDS OF AN OLD MAN.

For bustling life I am unfit,
Such therefore I deny ;
More serious thoughts become me best,
And make me fit to die.
The noisy crowd, the busy town,
Unsuited are to me :
Reflection's now my chief delight,
To that alone I flee.
For inward peace, not outward show,
Continually I sigh,

And what can better suit a man
Whose end, like mine, is nigh ?
Too much have I as yet to do,
Neglect so marks the past ;
What fears must then affect *his* heart,
Who *thinks* not till the last ?

EVENING REFLECTION.

WHEN I reflect on all I've done this day,
How often into sin been led astray,
I thankfully adore that gracious God,
Who, in His mercy, spares the chast'ning rod.
How often, wand'ring lukewarm in my prayers,
When earthly thoughts intruded, and the cares
Of this vain world I've thought of, and much more
Than Him, who hour by hour I should adore ;
And when I search within, altho' I find
Such vanity and folly in my mind,
I yet do kneel in fervent hope and prayer,
That God will still vouchsafe his gracious care.

PRAYER.

AND wilt Thou lend a willing ear
To praises low as mine ?
Wilt Thou, Almighty, deign to hear
Prayer from so mean a shrine ?
Wilt Thou, all glorious as Thou art,
Regard me weak and frail ?
My God to Thee I give my heart ;
When did Thy mercy fail ?
And wilt Thou deign, when slumber seals
These wearied eyelids down,
To watch my helpless, passive form,
From Thy celestial throne ?
O Lord my first, last thought incline,
To serve but Thee alone ;
Be Thou my hope thro' ev'ry day,
Till days on earth are gone !

THE CHILDREN'S HYMN.

SUNDAY MORNING.

HARK ! to the bell whose joyful sound,
Is heard in every place ;
Calling each prayerful soul around
Th' eternal throne of grace.

Thy children—we obey the call—
In meekness, Lord, we bend ;
Let not the world our hearts enthrall,
O Saviour, God, and Friend.

In spirit and in truth we raise
Our infant voices high ;
Where Cherubim Thy greatness praise
Throughout eternity.

Oh may the seed thy word imparts
Grow up like early flowers ;
Teaching and strength'ning all our hearts,
For life's sad trying hours.

Of haunts where sin hath spread a net,
May we in time beware ;
And thro' thy precepts ne'er forget
The tempter lurketh there !

Jesu, our Saviour, God, and Friend,
Teach us to come to Thee ;
This day Thy Holy Spirit send,
That we accepted be.

“And a voice came out of the throne, saying, ‘Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great.’”—Rev. xix, 5.

THE INVALID'S SUNDAY.

“How many blessed groups this hour are bending
Thro’ England’s meadow-paths their way ;
I may not tread with them those pathways.
To the fevered bed of sickness bound, yet, oh my God
I bless Thy mercy, that with Sabbath peace hath
Filled my heart, and all its throbbings stilled,
In one deep calm of lowliest thankfulness !”—*Hemans.*

OH, God, this day to us is given,
To raise our thoughts in prayers to Heaven,
Oh may my mind inspired be,
Calmly to meditate on Thee.
I cannot seek Thy temple gate,
On me doth pining sickness wait.
I cannot in the assembled crowd,
Hear Thy lov’d word proclaim’d aloud ;
Yet still in peace, in privacy,
My lowly prayer I make to Thee ;
And though upon my languid brow,
This throbbing pain weighs heavy now ;
And tho’ my tongue is parch’d and weak,
It cannot e’en Thy praises speak,

My mind is still unthralled and free,
Sickness hath kept it not from Thee.
I bless Thee! For tho' fever reigns,
And poisons health within my veins;
Tho' tis Thy will that I should share
The evils to which flesh is heir,
My senses still retain their place,
My God I thank Thee for this grace.
Thy blessed word I still can hear,
Conveyed by voices that are dear;
Which mem'ry will again supply,
As on my fever'd couch I lie.
If health once more with rosy smile
Comes back to cheer me for awhile,
When the cool breezes fan my cheek,
Bracing the limbs, through sickness weak,
To whom shall my first thoughts ascend?
To *Thee*, Creator, God, and Friend.
If otherwise, on faith reposing,
When my weary eyes are closing,
Oh may my soul unfettered rise,
To the rest remaining in the skies.

THE RECOVERY.

THE pulse its even measure beats,
And o'er the frame these genial heats
Proclaim that sickness is no more,
And sweet health breathes thro' ev'ry pore.
Oh health ! what bliss it is to feel
Thy presence, when o'er us doth steal
Sweet sleep and all her soothing train,
After so many days of pain !
But 'ere oblivion doth seize
My senses to luxurious ease,
I'll breathe one grateful prayer to Heav'n,
Conscious by Whom the blessing's giv'n.

ZION'S KING.

FOR PALM SUNDAY.

HAIL! Zion's children, hail! behold thy King
In meek array, doth solemn warning bring.
Lo! on an ass the great Redeemer deigns
To ride, and thus His kingly power claims.
At His approach the crowd, as if inspired,
With holy zeal and loyalty were fired!
They strip the stately trees, and strew the way
With leafy boughs, and some their garments lay,
To greet the Lord, while loud Hosannas rise
In one great cry, and rend the vaulted skies.
Yes!—one cometh, cometh with the name
Of Christ: 'twas thus He came, and thus greeted, He
Advanced in meekness and humility.
He came, He came to conquer, yet to die!
Still at His feet the serpent bruised shall lie,
He, the great Hero, not from earth but Heaven,
For unto man was then Salvation given.

THE PENITENT.

THE first bud on the tender tree,
With youth and freshness rife ;
The dew-drop falling from the flower,
When newly sprung to life :
The pure fresh breeze which, sighing, wakes
When the gorgeous sun appears ;
And paints the cheek with freshened bloom,
From midnight's burning tears :
All these are beautiful and pure,
'Tis God who gave them life ;
All these are innocent as youth,
A stranger yet to strife.

But go—behold the sinner kneel
Beneath the sacred dome ;
The world deserts him, and 'tis there
He seeks and finds a home !
Go ! mark the tear-drop in his eye,
As he mourns each conscious sin ;

The full heart pouring from the lip,
The agony within !
The short prayer,—yet how deeply felt !—
The supplication giv'n,
More precious are than nature's glow,
They welcome find in Heaven.

THE BELIEF.

“Jesus answered them, ‘Do ye now believe?’”

Do we believe ? This day did we not raise
To God a hymn of gratitude and praise ?
Did we not meekly sit to hear His Word,
And join each supplication which we heard ?

Have we fail'd in each duty which we owe ;
Did we not with our friends and neighbours bow ;
Did we forget each *form* to be observ'd ;
Can doubts of our belief be e'er deserv'd ?

Yes ! we have done all this, but were the soul,
The heart, the mind, still held beneath control :
The wand'ring eye, with it the wand'ring thought,
Were they restrain'd, by heav'nly wisdom taught ?

True, outward forms are right, but they must be
Without the semblance of hypocrisy,
For oh ! without the *heart*, prayer cannot rise,
Like vapour it will vanish 'neath the skies !

Can the "Belief"—with truth and wisdom fraught—
Be utter'd by the lip without a thought ?
And shall that Name, at which each knee should bow,
Be spoken, when the spirit does not bow ?

The highest and the lowest, God will hear,
If prayer be offer'd from the heart sincere ;
His justice we shall never fail to trace,
Give but ourselves, and He will give His grace.

TO ONE ENTERING LIFE.

AND now, exempt from every tutor's care,
You still the caution of a friend may share :
On life's gay ocean, rides your bark at large,
A slight built vessel with a precious charge.

Oh! think what dangers in that ocean lie,
What rocks and shoals, deep-hidden from the eye!
Prudence, with all her foresight, scarce can shun
The risks which youth and inexperience run.
The Syren—*Pleasure*—it has most to fear,
Should she once catch the soft unguarded ear.
Then all the dreadful monsters of the main
Which ancient poets of Charybdis feign.
The madd'ning juices of the vintage shun,
For, oh! by these how many are undone!
If Vice should spread her net, ah! then beware,
And say with Solomon, "The dead are there!"
Her artful lure, should Gaming ever spread
Her cards, her dice, and all her orgies dread!
Ruin, remorse, and all its rueful train,
Will surely haunt the lawless thirst for gain.
Then fly the snare, avoid the certain shame,
Which closely presses on the gambler's name.
For God and man observe a due regard,
And this at last will be your sure reward:
Thro' length of days you'll fair respect engage,
And crown a virtuous youth with honoured age.

THE VILLAGE PASTOR.

“ BESIDE the bed where parting life is laid,”
Praying, and soothing minds with guilt dismay’d ;
Reading God’s word, explaining then some part,
Dear to the reader’s as the sick man’s heart ;
Giving the blessed feast, and never ceasing
Visits of love, as life’s flame is decreasing ;
Till call’d to read the last soul-stirring prayer
O’er the cold clay, in God’s green acre there !
Hearing from youthful lips the blessed creed,
And Saviour’s prayer ; lambs of the flock to feed,
Teaching the rule of life, by each repeated ;
With kind forbearance each in turn are treat’d,
Instilling courage in the scholar shy,
And praising others with benignant eye.
Preparing youthful pilgrims for that day
When the chief pastor holy hands shall lay
On each young head—an impress made for life,
A shield against the world and Satan’s strife !

THE EXHORTATION AFTER CONFIRMATION.

Go on, go on thou youthful band,
Go forward to the happy land ;
Forbear to loiter on the way,
Work well thy work, while yet 'tis day.
Go on, keep Heaven full in view,
Go, serve a Master just and true ;
Like servants at the marriage feast,
Obey at once—He loves it best.
Say, would He tell us aught to do,
If 'twere not best for me and you ?
Take up the shield and hold it near,
Then Satan's wiles ye shall not fear !
Blest bread to feed thy soul receive,
And each one answer, "I believe ;"
Drink of the cup of love divine,
And sing, "O, Saviour, I am Thine !"

GOD'S BEST GIFTS.

RETURNING sabbaths, mark how time
Bears us on from birth to prime !
When will this fever'd life be o'er ?
When will earth's cares be felt no more ?

When in His own appointed hour,
God shall cut off the faded flower,
Either to cast in scorn away,
Or plant 'mid blistful realms of day.

When fainting between life and death,
Say would it sooth my parting breath,
To think of guilty pleasure o'er,
Or fulsome flatt'ry now no more ?

Say, would-I wish to live again,
To be above all other men ?
Mine, nature's brightest gifts to call,
In talent far surpassing all ?

To live on still, tho' ev'ry grace,
Should mould the form, adorn the face,
E'en for a critic to approve,
And envy own the queen of love ?

To live, though gems from ev'ry clime,
And hoards of gold I could call mine ;
Tho' I might rule on land or sea,
Could I buy immortality ?

From high to low, we all must die,
Death will soon close the brightest eye !
On *greatness* and the coffer'd store,
Grim fate will smile, then close the door !

A seat prepared with saints on high,
A treasur'd store above the sky,
A tongue to praise, a heart with Thee,
Are Thy best gifts—Lord give them me !

OLD LETTERS.

RECORDS of the dead ! how I love to trace
These lines, once written by a hand long cold ;
While memory recalls each cherished face,
And ev'ry word brings back lov'd scenes of old.

They live again, in my mind's eye they live,
In gayest youth or pious cheerful age,
Here I peruse the jocund news they give,
There read wise counsel from the good and grave.

"Can they be gone?"—I cry—"the heart which beat,
The hand which trac'd these feelings warm and true,
Are they now dust ? Oh ! where is the retreat
Of the immortal part—its dwelling new ?"

Great awful mystery !—thus all must die !
And o'er perchance the very lines we trace,
Some kindred bosom will bestow a sigh,
Or tears bedew a youthful blooming face.

Lord of our lives, teach us each day this truth,
How short our time, how frail our tenure here ;
And help us to lay up a store in youth,
For a more lasting and a brighter sphere.

TO ONE DEPARTED.

THOU art gone to the grave, and our weeping should cease,
For thy form, dearest Ellen, is resting in peace ;
Thou art gone—to thy sweet voice we listen no more,
It is hymning God's praises on Heaven's bright shore.

Time's finger can never trace lines on that brow,
Or weave those brown tresses with threads like the snow,
Or dim those sweet eyes whence the soul has departed:
We weep for their beams, yet are not broken-hearted.

A short span divides us : when *that* is passed over,
We meet, and to part again ? Never, oh, never !
Thro' the bright star of Faith lasting glories we see,
If we live in those virtues, once practised by thee.

TO THE NEW YEAR.

DAWN of a new year, I greet thee,
Advancing on life's stage !
Thoughtful, calmly may I meet thee,
Even from youth to age.

But if it be th' Almighty's will,
Old age I never see !
Or e'en in thee my days to fill,
I'll bow to that decree !

How wisely hidden from our view,
Are hours decreed to come ;
They may be many, or be few,
In which our sands will run.

Days, weeks, and months glide swiftly by,
Spring flowers bloom, then fade,
Telling us nature's death is nigh,
'Ere comes the wintry shade !

'Tis thus, and thus, time will pass on,
Till the appalling sound,
Behold, time's earthly span is gone!
Where now can rest be found?

Then let us meet the new year's dawn
In meek humility!
We know not when will shine the morn
Of our eternity.

EVENING HYMN.

'NEATH Thy protection, O my God,
No danger can I fear;
I sink to sleep, for well I know
Good angels hover near.
And when fleet years have come and gone,
Oh may I find such rest,
As thou hast promised, thro' Thy Son,
T' the ransomed and the blest.

SACRED HARMONY.

OH ! when 'neath yonder holy fane
The suppliant people bend,
May contrite and repentant hearts
Rise to their God and Friend.
When hearts with voices praise His name,
The "Life, the Truth, the Way,"
The same a million years ago,
The same as yesterday.
Oh ! what a glorious act is this—
'Tis born of heav'nly love—
To practise strains of praise below,
Ready for songs above.

THE UNSEEN BENEFACTRICE.

A VILLAGE SKETCH.

SUSAN AND NELLY.

SUSAN.

"WE only saw her coffin, Nell,
 We never saw her face,
 Altho' for many years she'd been
 Residing in this place ;
 But we felt her constant kindness,
 By clothing warm and good,
 She sent to us unsparingly,
 Besides her gifts of food.
 It is seven year come Michaelmas
 Since my poor mother died, '
 For whom she was ever thoughtful,
 And all her wants supplied ;
 And so for the poor boy Charley,
 The one that is so lame,
 She often sent her waiting maid,
 Altho' *she* never came.

And when that fever once broke out,
Which drove poor mothers wild,
Jelly and cooling drink she sent
To ev'ry suff'ring child.
Her ear was open to the cry
Of all oppressed with sorrow,
Tho' she laid helpless on her couch
From morn e'en till the morrow."

NELLY.

"Do you say she never murmured,
Shut up in her dull room,
Thro' the months of lovely spring-time,
And then thro' winter's gloom?
Oh! could I never pluck wild flowers,
Or roll up balls of snow,
I'd rather lie where she does now
And leave this world of woe!"

SUSAN.

"She never murmured, for she knew
Her Saviour was her friend,
And tho' in life she suffered much,
In Heav'n it all would end.

What she was like, we longed to see
Oft as we passed her gate,
And wonder'd one so kind and good,
Should have so sad a fate.
And when the solemn Church bell tolled,
Telling a tale that's true,
We felt that we had lost a friend,
Tho' one we never knew!
I'm sure in yon blue sky above,
Where all good people go,
She's singing like an angel now,
Looking on us below!
Ah! Nelly if we *could* get there,
How happy we should be
To find the lady who, on earth,
We loved and longed to see;
We'd run to her, and take her hand,
Saying, 'You dried each tear,
We could not see you on the earth,
But we have found you here.'
And then together we would sing
His praise, who reigns for ever!
No rank to keep us there apart,
No death fond hearts to sever."

THE BABY BOYS' GRACE.

(TEA TIME.)

A LITTLE simple hymn arose
Upon the evening air,
So full of peace and sweet repose,
I stopped to listen near.

From two pure hearts, unknowing yet
This world's deceitful ways,
Their notes in artless cadence met,
And swelled in God's high praise.

* * * * *

Oh God of mercy, keep these boys
Safe from all ills and harm ;
Give them to taste life's richest joys,
Temptation's power disarm.

THE NOONDAY RIDE,
SUGGESTED BY
THE LAST HOURS OF BISHOP WILBERFORCE.

Obit July 19th, 1873.

THE sky was bright, the summer landscape glow'd,
The air was fragrant, as the bishop rode :
Doubtless amid his social chat he took
Sweet notes of love from nature's wond'rous book.
Love for that Being, who before him spread
Such beauties, that his soul was upward led,
And, gazing thus, he blest God's kindly hand,
Yet yearned in spirit for the better land ;
Yet little thought he that fair land to gain
Without sad partings or the grief of pain !
Anon he fell ! His spirit upward flew
At once to Christ ! to find his teachings true.
Labour all ended !—yea, his work was done
Ere half his course had reached the glowing sun !
Gifted, far-famed on earth, a higher sphere
Receives his soul, so loved and honour'd here.

*

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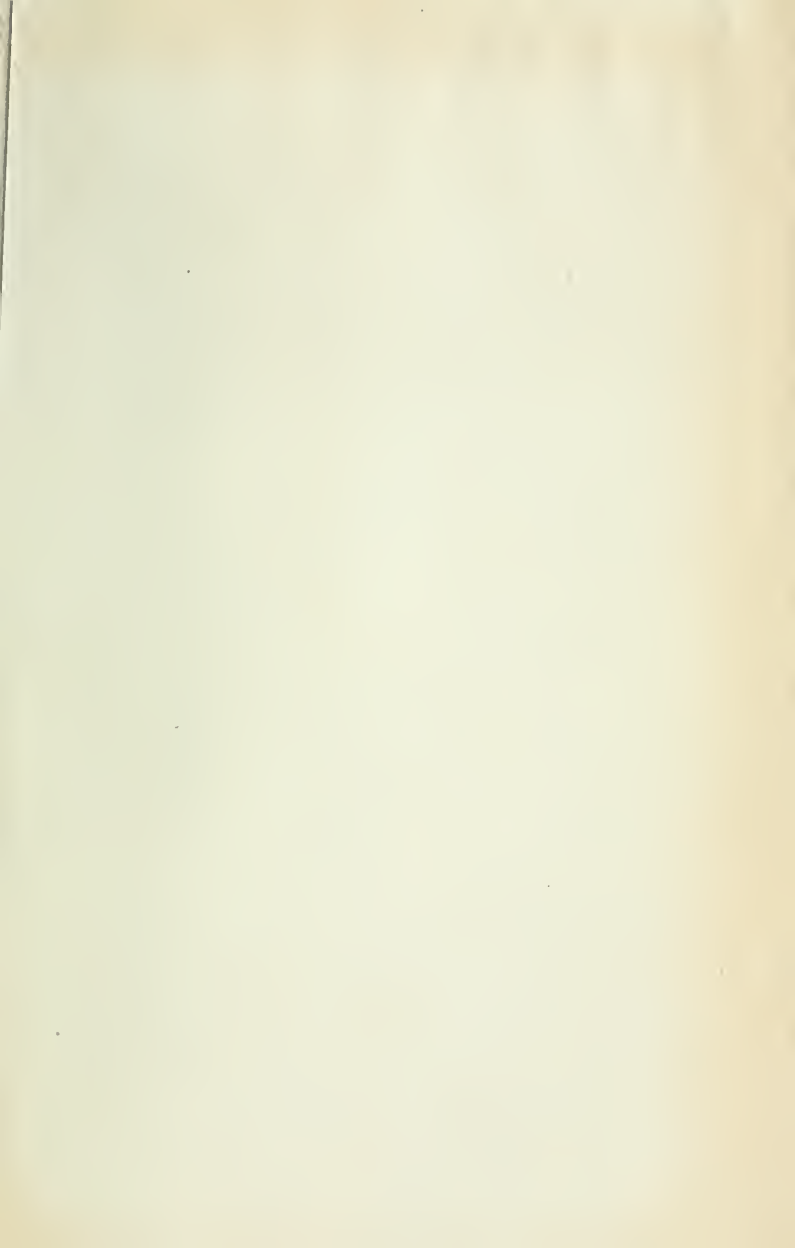
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Be *ye then ready*, for the Master's call
Unexpectedly on the ear may fall;
Prepare your lamps—ere long that cry will come—
“Haste ye! the Bridegroom bids you to His home.”



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